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Christmas in the Primary Grades

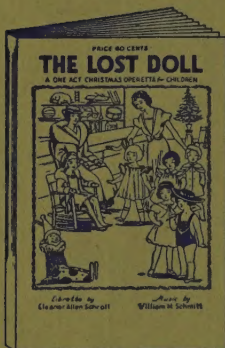


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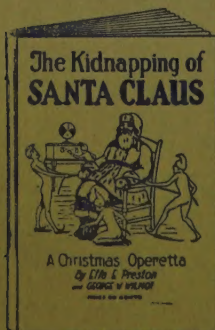
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CHRISTMAS

IN THE

PRIMARY GRADES

By NOEL FLAURIER

Author of

"Everyday Dialogues"

"The Christmas Entertainment Book"

"Five Hours to Go", etc.



PAINE PUBLISHING COMPANY

DAYTON, OHIO

CHRISTMAS IN THE PRIMARY GRADES

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CONTENTS

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Recitations

	PAGE
ARTIST JACK FROST.....	10
BELLS OF SILVER.....	27
BELLS I WANT, THE.....	10
BEST STORY, THE.....	35
BETHLEHEM'S STAR	32
BETTY GROWS	12
BIG GAME	31
BIG IN A WAY.....	11
BRAVE CANDLE, THE.....	14
CANDY CANES WILL DO.....	16
CAROLS OF OLD	27
CHRISTMAS CONDUCT	19
CHRISTMAS HOUSEWIFE, THE.....	9
CHRISTMAS—HURRAY!	13
CHRISTMAS IN THE OLD WOMAN'S SHOE.....	20
CHRISTMAS MESSAGE	17
CHRISTMAS SHERLOCK HOLMES, A.....	16
CHRISTMAS WORRIES	25
CINDERELLA TREE	11
CODE LETTER, THE.....	15
DILEMMA, A	13
EVERYBODY HAPPY	16

	PAGE
FIRST, THE	35
FORTUNE TELLING	29
'FRAID CATS	9
GAME DEPENDS ON SANTA, THE.....	22
GIANT ORDER, A.....	33
GIFTS AND GIFTS.....	34
GLOOM AND JOY.....	26
HERO AND COWARD.....	12
HIGH HOPES	28
IF HE BUT KNEW.....	29
IN THE DAWN.....	34
LITTLE CHILD'S GIFT, A.....	35
LITTLE JAPANESE	14
MANDY JANE	10
MATTER FOR CARE, A.....	28
MATTER OF NEEDLES, A.....	11
MRS. SANTA CLAUS.....	21
MULTITUDE OF THINGS, A.....	20
MY WISHES	13
O'ER STAR-WHITE HILLS.....	23
OLD WORDS	33
ORDERS BY RADIO.....	28
PAINS OF A RUBBER BALL.....	20
PARTICULAR	31
PLEASE DO NOT NOTICE.....	28
POPCORN BALL FOR ME, THE.....	15
PRESENTS BIG AND SMALL.....	18

CONTENTS

5

PAGE

QUESTIONS	12
SANTA'S ASSISTANT	13
SANTA'S FACTORY	22
SANTA IN JULY.....	17
SCARED	18
SCHEMING PUSSY, A.....	18
SERIOUS TALK WITH SANTA, A.....	24
SIGNS OF THE TIMES.....	14
SMALL BUT BRIGHT.....	31
SMALL SPEECHES	24
SNOWFLAKE AND WIND.....	14
SONG OF CHRISTMAS CHEER, A.....	21
SONG OF THE SNOWFLAKES.....	19
STRANGE GIFTS	25
STRONGER TOYS, PLEASE.....	17
TEDDY BEAR'S GREETING.....	23
THREE CANDLES	24
TURKEY TALKY TALK.....	26
WASTED CURIOSITY	30
WHY I'M HERE.....	22
WOODEN SOLDIER, THE.....	15
YULETIDE NIGHTMARE, A.....	21

Action Songs

ASKERS, THE	40
CANDY TREE, THE.....	41
CLEANUP, THE	37

	PAGE
DECORATIONS	44
MENDING PARTY, THE.....	36
SANTA CLAUS MAIDS.....	42
SANTA'S TOYMEN	38
WATCHERS, THE	43

Dialogues in Rhyme

CAREFUL GIVERS	47
CHRISTMAS HOPES	52
CONFESSIONS	59
GUIDING STAR, THE.....	53
HIDING PLACE, THE.....	55
HOLLY'S SECRET, THE.....	48
LOST TRIMMINGS, THE.....	50
OLD-FASHIONED SOUND, AN.....	57
ROAD TO SANTAVILLE, THE.....	49
SPELLING BEE, THE.....	46
STREETS AND WINDOWS.....	57
THREE ANIMALS BOLD.....	52
UNUSUAL IDEA, AN.....	54

Costume Specialties

BATTLE OF THE COLORS, THE.....	72
GIFTS AND GIFTS.....	69
RUNAWAY STOCKINGS, THE.....	63
SECRETS OF SANTA'S SACK.....	67
TEN LITTLE CANDLES	71

CONTENTS

	7
	PAGE
SWITCHES AND STOCKINGS.....	60
WINTER'S TREASURE BASKET.....	64
WOODLAND SCANDAL, A.....	75

Drills

BUGLER BOYS, THE.....	82
CANDLE CAPERS	84
MARCH OF THE CHRISTMAS HOURS.....	80
MIDNIGHT HOUR, THE.....	89
RAINBOW FROLIC	87
SNOWBALL BABIES	82

Dialogues and Plays

CHANGEABLE DRESS, A.....	108
EAGER EARS	102
FAIR EXCHANGE, A.....	116
GRANDMOTHER WILL DECIDE.....	113
GUARANTEED TO PLEASE.....	106
NEW SYSTEM, THE.....	95
ONE TASTE TOO MANY.....	91
TEA FOR THREE.....	100
WATCHFUL PRESENTS	97
WHO'S SICK?	104

Tableaux and Pantomimes

ANOTHER CHRISTMAS DREAM.....	125
AS CHRISTMAS PASSES.....	124

	PAGE
AUNT MARY'S MISTAKE.....	126
END OF THE TRAIL, THE.....	124
GREAT PREPARATIONS	126
HER FIRST TREE.....	122
KING NO MORE.....	123
LISTENERS, THE	125
ONE DAY, THE.....	123
PROBLEM, THE	123
RIDING TO DREAMLAND.....	122
TWINS	127
WINTER BOYS, THE.....	126

Monologues

BIG QUESTION, A.....	134
EAVESDROPPER, THE	128
HIS BOOKS	130
MAMMA'S ASSISTANT	131
RED AND GREEN.....	133
STRANGE DIFFERENCE, A.....	129
HOW NOAH DID IT.....	132
TOMMY TUCKER OFFERS SOME ADVICE.....	129

Opening and Closing Numbers

ANNOUNCERS, THE	139
BIG WELCOME, THE.....	135
LAST CHRISTMAS WISHES.....	141
SONG AND SMILES OF WELCOME, A.....	136
WE WANT TO PLEASE YOU.....	135

The GOLDEN BOOK OF FAVORITE SONGS can be supplied by the publishers of this book for 20 cents per copy.

Christmas in the Primary Grades



Recitations

THE CHRISTMAS HOUSEWIFE

SMALL HOUSEWIFE WITH BASKET

To market, to market, to market away,
To fill up my basket for dear Christmas Day.
Candies and cookies and cake there shall be,
And every sweet goodie my eager eyes see.
Peppermint, cocoanut, butterscotch, too,
Licorice, taffy in red, white and blue.
And then when I'm through searching each candy case,
If there's room, a fat turkey shall fill up the space.

'FRAID CATS

The sun has hid his big, bright eye
For all of 'leven days;
His flaming head of gorgeous red
He hasn't dared to raise.
And why?—it's 'cause he's scared, you see,
We'll put him on the Christmas tree.

The moon is jus' as timid, too,
She's very careful now and hides;
We never see her in the blue,
For back of darkest clouds she rides.
And why?—it's 'cause she's scared, you see,
We'll put her on the Christmas tree.

ARTIST JACK FROST

Sometimes on the window pane,
Old Jack Frost paints tall trees,
With palmy leaves of far-off climes,
That grow by Southern Seas.
But, oh! this morn his busy brush
Left such a rare display!
He painted only Christmas pines—
He knew 'twas Christmas Day.

MANDY JANE

LITTLE GIRL DRESSED AS DARKY
My mistress calls me Mandy Jane,
It ain't no stylish soundin' name;
I ain't no stylish lookin' doll,
Fac' is, I got no looks at all.
But don' my mistress love me, though!
She's not the stuck-up kind, you know.
When firs' she sawed me on the tree,
She jus' lets out one whoop of glee.
My woolly head and ole black face,
Ah hit her in the rightes' place.
As Chris'mus gif', I hopes to say,
I made her glad that Chris'mus Day.
Yes, mistress calls me Mandy Jane,
But she-all loves me, jus' the same.

THE BELLS I WANT

Big bells are for big folks,
To play a Christmas song,
But all I want are tiny bells
That tingle all day long;
And as they tingle, let them say,
"Christmas Day! Christmas Day!"

Like this I want my bells to sound:
"Ring! Ring! Ring! [*Bells.*]
And while they play their merry tune
A Christmas song I'll sing.
I think the words will go this way:
"Christmas Day! Christmas Day!"

BIG IN A WAY

Not very big, you're thinkin',
And I'll admit you're right;
Yet, spite of that, I'm feelin' big
Because it's Christmas Night.

A MATTER OF NEEDLES

The Christmas tree has needles,
So has Sir Porcupine;
Mama has her needles, too,
And I, of course, have mine.

The Christmas needles sing a song,
Porky—he's afraid!
But we two with our needles bright,
Three lovely gifts have made.

CINDERELLA TREE

Oh, this Cinderella tree!
What a sparkling mystery!
How did it dress in all this color?
When last I looked 'twas quite another:
Green and dark and Quaker plain—
You'd never guess it was the same.

But Cinderella, no doubt, knows,
For she once wore those dazzling clothes,
That came from nowhere, so they say—
Could this dress, too, have come that way?

HERO AND COWARD

I'm 'fraid of North Wind and his teeth,
He does things to my nose;
But he's a coward, for to my eyes
Himself he never shows.
'Course, Santa hides his pack and sled
In that same very way,
But he's a hero all the same—
He comes on Christmas Day.

BETTY GROWS

Last Chris'mus Santa brought a doll
That was so tall, so tall!
Her nose was mos' as high as mine
When she stood by the wall.
But now my nose is 'way above,
I'm growin' you can see,
And Lucy Sarah Anna Jane
Comes hardly to my knee.

QUESTIONS

Does Santa dress in red?
Does he come up to one's bed?
And stand and smile and all the while
Give pats upon one's head?
Does he whisper, "She's asleep"?
Does he cover up one's feet?
Then, on tip-toe, most gently go
In careful, soft retreat?

CHRISTMAS—HURRAY!

My words won't tell you much,
Only my smiles will say,
As they grows big and bigger:
"Hurray! Christmas! Hurray!"

SANTA'S ASSISTANT

"Will Santa be like the pos'man,
And maybe come late?" I asked.
"Perhaps he will," said Mamma,
"He has a dreadful task."
I think I'll go and meet him,
And help him on his way;
I couldn't bear if he was late
With my toys Chris'mus Day.

A DILEMMA

My Christmas piece has just four lines,
But when last night I thought I'd see
If I could say it 'zackly right,
It strangely came out only three.

And then I tried again, once more,
And worse yet, sure as I'm alive,
I can't explain to save my name,
But that time there were all of five.

MY WISHES

A clatter of hoofs
As Santa lands,
Then stockings stuffed to the brim.
Right on top,
I hope you'll find,
Best wishes I've sent with him.

THE BRAVE CANDLE

SMALL CHILD DRESSED IN RED WITH YELLOW FLAME

I am a Christmas candle,
The wind upsets my flame;
Now I'm high, now I'm low,
But up I bob the same.
For I'm a Christmas candle,
And they, as you must know,
Give out until the very end
A cheery Christmas glow.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Spittin' puddin', all of plums,
Makes us suck our hungry thumbs;
Brownin' turkey on his back,
No brownin' turkey, what a lack!
Frosted cakes, a precious sight,
Cut-out cookies, pink and white.
All this means, I'm bound to say,
We're on the road to Christmas Day.

SNOWFLAKE AND WIND

"Merry Christmas," sounds the storm wind,
"Merry Christmas," each snowflake.
And I, too, sing the same words with
A bow for old time's sake.

LITTLE JAPANESE

Little Japanese,
In far-off Tokio,
If you could even guess
The wondrous tale I know!
How your almond eyes
Would open full and wide,
If you but knew of Santa on the
Other ocean side.

THE POPCORN BALL FOR ME

Fairy balls are on the tree:
Red and green and blue, I see,
But I don't care for them a' tall—
Give me the good ole popcorn ball.

Golden sticky, mighty big,
Hope I don't act like a pig,
But off with gay balls on the tree—
The popcorn ball's the ball for me.

THE WOODEN SOLDIER

SMALL BOY DRESSED AS WOODEN SOLDIER
I'm a wooden soldier whose livelong day
Is passed in such a splendid way.
I guard the pine tree's bright array,
While Christmas hours are fleeting.

But yet while guarding the loaded tree,
I pause to say it pleases me,
And softens my hard heart wonderfully
To give you Christmas greetings.

THE CODE LETTER

I'm just as provoked as I can be,
And when you hear, you'll 'gree with me
They shouldn't be laughin' at this nice letter
I wrote to Santa, so's the better
He'd bring me jus' the doll I wishes,
And those nice pink-flowered china dishes.
'Course they can't read it; it's a kind
Of special writin' that I find
Old Santa knows, and only he—
And that's the part that pleases me.
If others can't read it, so much the better!
Jus' Santa and me knows what's in this letter.

EVERYONE HAPPY

Snowbirds chirped on bare, brown bough,
 "Merriest season's greeting!
Happier souls than we are now
 You'll not again be meeting."
But, folks, I know on Christmas Day,
You'll steal the snowbirds' crown away.

CANDY CANES WILL DO

Presents for my folks!—
 I must decide today.
I b'lieve a little candy cane
 Will do for Sally May.

For mamma I must think a while,
 She likes candy, too.
I wonder—would a nice-sized cane
 Of striped candy do?

For daddy I could get a book,
 Or rubbers for the rain,
Or—Oh! I know! I'll get for him
 The biggest candy cane.

A CHRISTMAS SHERLOCK HOLMES

SMALL BOY DRESSED AS COMEDY DETECTIVE WITH BEARD,
LENS, ETC.

[He produces pieces of evidence from his pocket as he talks. Enters examining floor and walls closely with lens.]

Sss!—I'm a detectative bold
 On good old Santa's trail;
My methods are the very best—
 I took my course by mail.

I'll tell you what I found just now:
A piece of Santa's whiskers,
Two silver bells dropped from the heads
Of certain reindeer friskers,

This wheel from off a broken toy,
A sparkly Christmas ball,
A bit of tinsel which in haste
He carelessly let fall,

A candy stick, a colored block—
All these tell without fail
That Santa's somewhere here about,
And I'm hot on his trail.

STRONGER TOYS, PLEASE

The Chris'mus toys I got last year
Are in an awful state;
They'll hardly last a day if they
Keep breakin' at this rate.
But there's no use in cryin' over
Spilt milk, so they say;
I hope that I'll get stronger toys
This coming Chris'mus Day.

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

The roofs of homes are blanketed
In dreamy robes of white,
And out through homey windows shine
The Yulelog's gracious light.
They all sing out my thought most gay:
To you, a merry Christmas Day.

SANTA IN JULY

If Santa came in summer time
How would he then be dressed?

If you ask me, a bathin' suit,
I think 'ud be the best.

For he is oh! so awful fat,
And in the summer time
How that poor man would suffer comin'
From a colder clime!

A bathin' suit, a pretty one,
The kind my papa wears;
All red and white and kind of tight,
With funny stripes in pairs.

That 'ud be jus' the dress for him!
And everyone would say
When they saw Santa Claus, "Hurrah!
We're glad it's Christmas Day!"

SCARED

They gave me a minute to speak to you,
And, golly, I don't know what to do.
A minute is much too long for me,
I'm such a small boy, you can easily see.
It must be most over by this long, long time,
So with best Christmas wishes, I'll end this old rhyme.

PRESENTS BIG AND SMALL

Presents big! Presents small!
All the presents that there are,
I hope are on their way to you
Packed in good old Santa's car.

A SCHEMING PUSSY

My kitty knows it's Christmas,
My Angelina May;
This morning she quite plainly showed
She knew 'twas near the day.

She was so very quiet
While I was drinking milk;
She never cried, but washed herself
Until she shone like silk.

Polite and very gentle, too,
She purrs beside my feet;
She hasn't shown a claw for days,
She's really been too sweet.

But oh! the little rascal!
I know her scheming way;
I've seen her be this good before
When nearing Christmas Day.

SONG OF THE SNOWFLAKES

With a soft, swinging motion the snowflakes come down,
How gently they settle on country and town!
Can you hear what they're singing, the words that they
say?

"We're coming for Christmas! For glad Christmas Day!"

So softly they cuddle on dark roof and bough,
No uncovered spot will the snowflakes allow;
But just hear them singing, the words that they say:
"We're here, yes, we're here for your dear Christmas
Day."

CHRISTMAS CONDUCT

Hush! Be careful what you say!
It's getting so near Christmas Day.

Right this moment he may hear,
He's up the chimney now, I fear.

And pray take care of every word;
How sad if naughty ones he heard!

Try a perfect child to stay,
At least—'til after Christmas Day.

THE PAINS OF A RUBBER BALL

VERY FAT, SHORT CHILD DRESSED AS STRIPED BALL

Life is not too easy
For a bouncing rubber ball;
I really get quite faint at times
From some too dizzy fall.

And oh, my ribs! My ribs! My ribs!
Of course they're made of rubber,
But I can tell you they get pains,
Same as those of another.

Yet it's no use to whine and weep,
And wish that I could shirk;
A rubber ball until it bursts
Is always hard at work.

A MULTITUDE OF THINGS

Bells ring,
Hearts sing,
For it is Christmas tide.
Big toys,
Little boys,
A hundred gifts that hide,
Wherever able,
Under table,
On the closet floor!
Hurray! Hurray!
For Christmas Day!
We're laughing more and more.

CHRISTMAS IN THE OLD WOMAN'S SHOE

I'm glad I'm not one of the children
Who lived in the Old Woman's Shoe,
For on gay Christmas evening when Santa Claus came,
What could the poor, dear, old soul do?

Some child must have surely been left
With a stocking that knew not a toy.
What a weeping and wailing must then have been heard
From that poor, passed-by, small girl or boy.

A SONG OF CHRISTMAS 'CHEER

Santa gave me these merry bells,
I hold so gaily herè,
To ring with might on Christmas Night
A song of Christmas cheer.

A YULETIDE NIGHTMARE

Last Christmas Eve,
If you'll believe,
A dreadful time I had.
When nine had sped,
I went to bed.
What happened then was sad.
I had a dream
Of a football team,
A cranberry football team!
It makes me shrink
To dare to think
Of how their eyes did gleam!
Round red eyes,
So hard and wise,
With terror I recall,
For heeding not sighs, nor
Piercing cries—
They used me for the ball!

MRS. SANTA CLAUS

MRS. SANTA CARRIES AN ARMFUL OF CANDY BOXES

I am Mrs. Santa Claus,
What busy times for me!

You know, I tend the candies that
They put upon the tree.

I pack them in gay boxes,
And I cap each one with holly.
Without me Santa says the day
Would never be so jolly.

WHY I'M HERE

Yes, I'm scared, and there's no use
In tryin' to hide my shakin' knees!
I'm only here because I wanted
All of my dear, kind friends to please.
Just here to bow and here to say,
"A merry, merry Christmas Day."

THE GAME DEPENDS ON SANTA

If St. Nick brings a drum, I say,
I'll be a soldier all the day.

But if he brings a shiny train,
All day I'll drive through snow and rain.

Perhaps, he'll leave a reg'lar gun;
I'll hunt until the day is done.

But soldier, fireman, hunter of game,
One or other, it's all the same.

For as to which I shall really be
Depends on what St. Nick brings to me.

SANTA'S FACTORY

Tom said that he would like to see
The place where Santa trims each tree.
Jane said she most would wish to know
Howe'er he makes a doll's hair grow.

And George's heart has long been laid
On seeing the room where toys are made.
But in Santa's whole fact'ry, way up to the top,
I want to see only the candy shop.

Tom thinks in trimming each Christmas tree,
There must be magic or mystery.
Jane stated her mind about the hair,
And thought 'twas marvelous it grew there.
George said that he was willing to bet,
He'd take all toys that he could get.
But in Santa's whole fact'ry, way up to the top,
I want to see only the candy shop.

TEDDY BEAR'S GREETING

My Teddy Bear sends his love to you,
He asked me please to say,
That he wishes to offer each one of you
His greetings for Christmas Day.

He said that he just couldn't come himself
Because he's so woolly and wild,
His growling and pawing and roaring, he said,
Would scare almost any small child.

So I bring you his message—and now for myself,
Let me add just a word while I'm here,
That I, too, wish you a glad Christmas Day,
And the very best happy New Year.

O'ER STAR-WHITE HILLS

Strange was the ride o'er star-white hills,
Awed must those hearts have beat,
As ours when on this Christmas Eve
We tell the Message sweet,
So with glad hearts to you we say,
Be joyous on this Christmas Day.

A SERIOUS TALK WITH SANTA

If I could talk to Santa Claus,
I'd look him in the eye,
And heart to heart we'd have a talk—
Just Santa Claus and I.

And I would tell him how a boy
Feels when for Christmas Day,
He gets a box of handkerchiefs
Instead of toys for play.

I'd tell him what I think about
A pair of stockings, too!
And ask him if he thinks it right
Such heartless things to do.

I tell you, stockings have their place,
And so have suits and shoes,
But just for once on Christmas Day
There's other gifts I'd choose.

SMALL SPEECHES

Small boys should make the smallest speeches,
I b'lieves in practicin' what I preaches,
So here I end this talk of mine,
'Cept—hope you've a merry Christmas time.

THREE CANDLES

THREE CANDLESTICKS STAND IN A ROW ON A TABLE. A SMALL GIRL ENTERS CARRYING THREE CANDLES OF DIFFERENT SIZES

[As she tells for whom each candle is intended she places it in the proper candlestick.]

This candle, tall as tall can be,
Is for my papa dear.

And this one that's just in between,
To mother's plate stands near.
While at my place a tiny one
Sends out a Christmas glow.
I'm not surprised—it's just my size—
I'm very small, you know.

STRANGE GIFTS

SMALL GIRL AT TABLE WRITING CHRISTMAS LIST

Dear, oh, dear!
Christmas near,
And I've not made a list
Of everything
St. Nick to bring,
And not a one be missed.
My dog, Teddy,
He's quite ready
Just to gnaw a bone.
And Kit Marie
Wants catnip tea.
Now these two gifts alone,
Old Santa dear
Will smile to hear,
But oh, what will he say
At my strange wish
That Ann Goldfish
Should get a cake that day!

CHRISTMAS WORRIES

Is my stockin' too small for Santa to see?
I'm worried, 'cause if he should overlook me,
Not only that day but the whole big year
Would be spoiled for me, I surely fear.

GLOOM AND JOY

Although the world has gone asleep
At Christmas time and snow is deep,
The colors of the Christmas trees
Make up for all the gloom one sees.
Glowing red and cheerful green,
Holly, candles, garlands gleam.
Who minds the gloom in all the glow?—
I'd really rather have it so.

TURKEY TALKY TALK

"I'm worried just to death,"
Said Turkey Talky Talk,
"In fact, my troubles bother so
I can't enjoy my walk."

"Oh, do you see those cakes
Making such a gallant show,
Inside the pantry window
Where they stand all in a row?

"Have you noticed all the juicy fruit
They're turning from the cans?
Have you smelled the spice of pickles,
And the well-baked homemade hams?

"And do you see those pies,
Cooling on the cellar door,
Really, as I look I find myself
A-trembling more and more.

"This morning through the kitchen door,
I saw with my own eyes,
The Christmas pudding all of plums
Decked gay in Yuletide guise.

"Oh, help! I fear my end is near!"
Cried Turkey Talky Talk,
"I'm worried so I simply can't
Enjoy my morning walk."

BELLS OF SILVER

Long years ago in Bethlehem
The herald angels sang,
And mid the star-rays their sweet song
Like bells of silver rang.

Like bells of silver never still,
For yet they ring today,
And "Christ is born in Bethlehem,"
Again their soft tones say.

CAROLS OF OLD

[A group of singers sing songs mentioned after speaker is through.]

Christmas! Merry Christmas!
The whole world knows the tunes
Of all the old, delightful songs
That we'll be singing soon.
"O Little Town of Bethlehem,"
Is one you surely know,
And "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear,"
Are words of long ago.
"Silent Night" in reverent tones
Will lend sweet melody,
"Deck the Halls" in merry mood
We'll sing in harmony.
And if perhaps the words you know
So well you'll not go wrong,
We gladly ask you to join in,
And help us with our song.

PLEASE DO NOT NOTICE

If I get all my words mixed up,
Please do not notice what I say,
Small girls get awful scared, you know,
When speakin' pieces in this way.
The 'portant thing's my wish that you
Will have a merry Christmas Day.

ORDERS BY RADIO

TINY CHILD WRITING LETTER

Dear Santa, I'm not writin' you
A great long gift list, row on row;
This note is jus' to tell you that
My order's gone by radio.

HIGH HOPES

I know that Santa's busy now,
And for mistakes I shall allow;
I've told him he might bring to me
Whate'er he can most handily.
A gun, a car, a baseball bat,
Marbles, tall boots, this or that.
I named them all, for, don't you see,
I'm hoping he'll bring them all to me.

A MATTER FOR CARE

Just a word about stockings now,
Before this program's o'er,
And all you smiling, merry folks
Go piling out the door.

Please use a little judgment, do,
When hanging them tonight,
And oh! be sure to check them up,
To see if they're just right.

In letters large and very black
Write every person's name,
Then for mistakes old Santa will
Have just himself to blame.

FORTUNE TELLING

Would you like to know your fortune?—
Take a candle on the tree,
Make a wish, and then sit down
And wait while Christmas minutes flee.
The candles glimmer shorter—short—
Sizzle! Puff! They've passed away,
But—if your candle goes out last
You'll get your wish some day.

IF HE BUT KNEW

Out in our yard the gobbler struts,
A proud old bird is he.
Alas! he does not know how changed
Within the week he'll be.
That haughty voice will soon no more
Sound on the winter breeze,
As, now, when gorgeously he hunts
For bits his hens to please.
If he but knew how very soon
His shining back be shorn,
Where now it glints with golden sun
In the December morn.
I picture him as he will look,
Trussed and stuffed to the rim,
A crisp, brown coat, all toothsome sweet,
Will be the coat for him.
So up the path the gobbler struts—
And lost in pride is he,—
What would he think if he but knew
How changed he soon will be?

WASTED CURIOSITY

[If possible, have Christmas tree on stage with bundles fitting description in poem. Otherwise, the speaker will have to direct his acting toward an imaginary tree.]

Do you see those bundles 'neath that tree?

One long, one square, one round;

[Indicates shape.]

The secret of what each one holds

To know I will be bound.

The long one might be scarf or tie,

[Looks at own tie.]

Perhaps some sort of game.

The square one is a new football

[Kicks imaginary ball.]

Or George is not my name!

The round one? Could it be a hat!

A curious Christmas gift.

[Scratches head.]

I'll just step close, though not for worlds

Would I give the lid a lift.

[Swaggers closer, hands in pockets, whistling a tune softly.]

What's this! "Aunt Jessie, Jim and Jane,"

[Starts back.]

Are names I plainly see!

To think I wasted all morning guessing

[In utter disgust.]

When not one of them is for me.

PARTICULAR

I want a doll with big, black eyes,
For mine, you see, are blue;
Her hair must be as dark as night,
And still she will not do—
Unless her dress is bright, bright red,
So bright, that on the tree,
She'll look just like a candle flame
A-smiling down on me.

SMALL BUT BRIGHT

The smalles' window I can find
I'll put this candle there;
Its tiny glow with all the world
I'm hoping I can share.
And when from out some window small
It shines so bright and true,
Please think of the small Christmas elf
Who put it there for you.

BIG GAME

**SMALL BOY WITH AIR GUN IN HAND, CREEPING AROUND THE
CHRISTMAS TREE**

*[If the tree is located elsewhere than on the stage, a
bough of a tree will do.]*

Behold! A mighty hunter, I,
Who hopes for dangerous game;
I'm looking for a tiger now
[Scans path, hand above eyes.]
To boost my mighty name.

No jungle beast can spring on me,
And find me unprepared.

[Gun to shoulder.]

My Christmas gun will stop him short!
So many a one has fared!

A hunter always looks for tracks;
[*Kneels and hunts.*]

A keen and wary eye
Will tell him just the kind of beast
He'll shoot down by and by.

I like them fierce! I like them wild!
A lion could rush out;
He wouldn't make me turn a hair!
I'd only give a shout,

[*Pupil with animal skin over him crawls slowly out from
behind tree.*]

And turn my gun on him like this,
[*Gun up.*]

I'd simply kill him dead—

[*Turns, sees animal, drops gun, and runs shrieking
“Help! Help!”*]

BETHLEHEM'S STAR

SPEAKER HOLDS A SILVER STAR AND A SMALL PASTEBOARD SANTA

Which shall I put on the top of the tree?
Which would old Santa be gladdest to see?
This glisteny star, all of silver display,
Or this small pasteboard Santa in Christmas array.
A question, I'm sure, that would make one just wonder,
If only I had countless minutes to ponder!
But though I have not, I would like to confess,
I think the best one I can just about guess.
I think good old Santa the gladdest would be
To see Bethlehem's Star on the top of the tree.

OLD WORDS

"Hang up the baby's stocking"—
Of course, you know those lines,
I think that I have heard them said
All of a thousand times.

The first was when I was so small,
A crawler on my knees,
I scarcely knew the meaning then,
Of sparkly, Christmas trees.

And then when little Bessie came,
I heard them said once more;
That time our chimney Christmas Eve
A pair of stockings wore.

And now this year for tiny Jim,
Again the words we say;
I like them for they seem to bring
The best of Christmas Day.

A GIANT ORDER

SMALL GIRL SEATED AT IMPROVISED SWITCHBOARD

Operator speaking. . . . Yes. . . . What number did you say? . . . Oh, Santa Claus! . . . Why, certainly. . . . He gets calls every day. . . . And does he answer? 'Deed he does! There's not a girl or boy who doesn't get his best regards when asking for some toy. . . . Why, yes, I'll take your order, if you'd rather have it so. . . . A minute, please, until I get a pencil. . . . Ready? . . . Go! . . . A doll, you say, with big, blue eyes, and curly yellow hair; a set of dishes, all gold-lined, a dresser and a chair; three handkerchiefs, pink, yellow, green, a box of chocolate drops, one puzzle book, two belts of silk, a watch that never stops. Some good perfume—[*The operator starts out naming gifts slowly and writing carefully, but she gradually speeds up until she is*

talking and writing at a furious rate.—Wait! Wait a while! [*Speaks in a slow distinct tone.*] You're going much too fast! I didn't get down half you said, right at the very last. Now, start again and please, I beg, just talk a little slow. I can not write it down when you go madly racing so. . . . A red bar pin, an ivory comb, a pencil on a chain, two books with daring Indian tales, a new coat for the rain. A flashlight and a pair of gloves, a calendar and—[*The operator, as before, has begun slowly and gradually speeded up to a maximum speed.*—Stop! I'm very sorry, but, my dear, I'll simply have to drop your Christmas list. Too many calls already have come in. I'll give you Santa's number now, and you can talk to him.

[*Dotted spaces in above indicate a pause, while operator listens to answer.*]

GIFTS AND GIFTS

There are gifts of every kind,
Good gifts, bad gifts, you will find;
There are gifts you can not see,
Of the heart, not of the tree;
But the important gift, as yet,
Is to 'preciate the ones you get.

IN THE DAWN

In the night time sang the angels,
For at night was Jesus born;
But I think they still were singing
When with light there came the morn.
"Jesus born in Bethlehem,"
They sang at break of dawn,
And that sweet song through years of hope
Sweeps gladly on and on.

THE FIRST

Oh, how I wish I could have been
With those who came and first saw Him!
How glad I'd be if I could say
I saw him that first Christmas Day.

A LITTLE CHILD'S GIFT

The Wise Men brought great riches
To Jesus on that night;
But I will bring Him just my love,
And then His boundless Light
Will shine for me the very same
As for all those who love His Name.

THE BEST STORY

I know a thousand stories,
And some are very good;
But not for any other,
Not even if I could,
Would I exchange the story
About the Christmas star,
And the strange light that on that night
Led shepherds from afar.

Action Songs

THE MENDING PARTY

ANY NUMBER OF GIRLS, EACH WITH A STOCKING IN HAND AND
NEEDLE AND THREAD IN THE FRONT OF DRESS

[*Stockings of assorted colors. A low chair stands behind each girl.*]

Melody: Jingle Bells, GOLDEN BOOK OF FAVORITE SONGS.

- ¹ Dear! What shall we do?
- ² Stockings full of holes!
- ³ Every second now,
- ⁴ Christmas nearer rolls.
- ⁵ Santa coming fast,
- ⁶ He'll soon be on the roof;
- ⁷ At once our stockings we must mend,
- ⁸ So they will be holeproof.

CHORUS.

- ¹ Take a stitch, take a stitch,
 - ² Mend it with a will,
 - ³ If we don't old Santa Claus
 - ⁴ Never would such stockings fill;
 - ⁵ Make it neat, make it neat,
 - ⁶ Look what you're about,
 - ⁷ How vexing if the threads broke,
 - ⁸ And our presents all fell out!
-
- ¹ There! the work is done,
 - ² Neat and all tip-toe,
 - ³ Now to bed with merry hearts,
 - ⁴ We can lightly go.

- ⁵ Mercy! What is this?
⁶ Another hole we've found!
⁷ Faster, faster, we must mend,
⁸ Ere Santa comes around.

FIRST STANZA.

- ¹ Hold up stockings with right hand inside.
² Put finger out through hole in toe.
³⁻⁴ Shake head despairingly.
⁵ Take hand from stocking.
⁶ Point upward.
⁷ Sit down and arrange stockings for mending.
⁸ Take out needle and thread.

CHORUS.

- ¹⁻² Mend in time to singing.
³ Tap right toe energetically in time.
⁴ Hold up stocking, and look at it with disgust.
⁵⁻⁶ Mend as before.
⁷ Lean over and examine each other's mending.
⁸ Spread hands to indicate falling.

SECOND STANZA.

- ¹ Remove hand from stocking.
² Examine mended place.
³ Rise from chair.
⁴ Shake stocking gaily.
⁵ Hold stocking close to face. Sing more slowly.
⁶ Put finger out through hole in heel.
⁷ Sit down hastily, and snatch out needle. Sing rapidly.
⁸ Get ready to mend.

THE CLEANUP

SMALL GIRLS SEATED ON CHAIRS DRESSING DOLLS

[Each girl has a comb and washrag in hand.]

Melody: *My Bonnie Is Over the Ocean*, GOLDEN BOOK OF
 FAVORITE SONGS.

- ¹ Our dollies we're dressing for Christmas,
² For Santa Claus soon will be here;
³ We want them to be just as pretty,
⁴ As when Santa left them last year.

CHORUS.

- ¹ Brush! Brush! Comb! Comb!
- ² Every small hair must be put in place.
- ³ Wash! Wash! Scrub! Scrub!
- ⁴ So dolly shall have a clean face.
- ¹ Perhaps they are not quite as spotless,
- ² For time, you know, will show its wear,
- ³ But yet we are hoping to clean them
- ⁴ By taking the greatest of care.

FIRST STANZA.

- ¹⁻² Hold up dolls.
- ³ Smooth dresses of dolls.
- ⁴ Pick up comb or brush.

CHORUS.

- ¹ Suit action to word.
- ² Adjust dolls' curls carefully.
- ³⁻⁴ Suit word to action.

SECOND STANZA.

- ¹ Turn dolls around in hands and examine.
- ² Shake head.
- ³ Set doll back into lap.
- ⁴ Pick up comb or brush.

SANTA'S TOYMEN

BOYS SEATED WITH WORK APRONS ON. RED PAPER CAPS.

[Each boy has a small hammer, and is working on a wooden toy.]

Melody: *Deck the Halls*, GOLDEN BOOK OF FAVORITE SONGS.

- ¹ We are Santa's loyal workers,
- ² Tap-a-tap-a-tap, a-tip-tap-toe.
- ³ No one dares to call us shirkers,
- ⁴ Tap-a-tap-a-tap, a-tip-tap-toe.

⁵ We make toys of numerous manners,

⁶ Tap-rap, tap-rap, tip-tap-toe,

⁷ With our trusty little hammers,

⁸ Tap-a-tap-a-tap, a-tip-tap-toe.

¹ These are toys, oh, please remember,

² Tap-a-tap-a-tap, a-tip-tap-toe,

³ That will wear 'til next December,

⁴ Tap-a-tap-a-tap, a-tip-tap-toe.

⁵ For we've worked both long and steady,

⁶ Tap-rap, tap-rap, tip-tap-toe,

⁷ So that gifts would all be ready,

⁸ Tap-a-tap-a-tap, a-tip-tap-toe.

¹ There you see the work we've done by

² Tap-a-tap-a-tap, a-tip-tap-toe,

³ Santa's shop is usually run by

⁴ Tap-a-tap-a-tap, a-tip-tap-toe.

⁵ What a cheerful song we're ringing,

⁶ Tap-rap, tap-rap, tip-tap-toe,

⁷ While our hammers loud are ringing,

⁸ Tap-a-tap-a-tap, a-tip-tap-toe.

FIRST STANZA.

2-4-6-8 Hammers beat energetically in time to words, on wooden toys, which are held in lap.

SECOND STANZA.

1-2 Every other boy holds up toys. Others tap.

3-4 Reverse above.

⁵ Toys in lap.

⁶ All beat time with hammers.

THIRD STANZA [*enter Santa Claus to inspect toys*].

1-2 Every other boy holds up toy. Santa walks in back and nods with satisfaction. Rubs hands gleefully.

3-4 Reverse above order.

⁵ Santa seats himself in empty chair in middle of row, first picking up the toy and hammer which rest there.

6-7-8 Santa joins in song and beats time with boys.

THE ASKERS

GROUP OF GIRLS AROUND SANTA, WHO IS SEATED
[Girls stand in semi-circle with opening of circle facing audience.]

Melody: When I Was a Lady, GOLDEN BOOK OF
 FAVORITE SONGS.

- ¹ Santa, will you bring us a dolly, a dolly,
- ² Oh, Santa, will you bring us a dolly that sleeps?
- ³ Sleeps this way, and that way,
- ⁴ And this way and that way,
- ⁵ Please, Santa, bring a dolly that always we'll keep.
- ¹ Thank you, good old Santa Claus, Santa, you dear soul,
- ² And now we want to ask you for one little thing.
- ³ It's this way and that way,
- ⁴ And this way and that way,
- ⁵ Oh, Santa, don't forget now, these new toys to bring.
- ¹ Santa, just lean closer, a secret, a secret,
- ² Oh, Santa, we forgot that there's still one more toy,
- ³ Goes this way and that way,
- ⁴ Goes this way and that way,
- ⁵ And surely we must have it to feel Christmas joy.

FIRST STANZA.

- ¹ Children bow deeply. Santa bows from his seat.
- ² Children close eyes.
- ³⁻⁴ Arms extended. To right on "this." To left on "that."
- ⁵ Clasp hands fervently against breast. Santa nods.

SECOND STANZA.

- ¹ Clap hands. Shake finger at Santa.
- ² Nod meaningly at each other.
- ³⁻⁴ Wash up and down on "this." Iron to right and left on "that."
 Santa loses smile. Looks around with dismayed expression.
- ⁵ Hands on hips. Bend toward Santa. He slowly nods his head.

THIRD STANZA.

- 1 Crowd around chair.
- 2 Bend over Santa. Put hands on his shoulders. Hold up finger on "one."
- 3-4 Each child does different thing. One plays horn. Another plays violin. Another sweeps, tosses ball, etc. Santa pushes them away with both hands and shakes head vigorously.
- 5 Santa rises. Puts out hands in gesture of desperation. Nods "Yes." Children seize him and hurry him from stage.

THE CANDY TREE

[A small pine tree has been covered with striped candy sticks. Very small children formed into circle around the tree, hands joined.]

Melody: *The Farmer In the Dell*, GOLDEN BOOK OF FAVORITE SONGS.

- 1 We dance around the tree!
- 2 It's here we like to be,
- 3 For all the joys of girls and boys
- 4 By looking you can see.
- 1 But what a pretty pine!
- 2 Oh, this is really fine!
- 3 Why, we'd best go a little slow,
- 4 And stop a bit to dine.
- 1 A merry sight to see!
- 2 We think that you'll agree,
- 3 What joy to know that candies grow
- 4 Right on the Christmas tree!

FIRST STANZA.

- 1-2 Sidewise skip, around tree.
- 3 Stop. Clap hands in time to music.
- 4 Point at tree.

SECOND STANZA.

- 1 All go close and feel candy sticks.
- 2 Jump up and down and clap hands.
- 3-4 Each seizes stick of candy and begins eating.

THIRD STANZA.

¹⁻² Skip around tree, one behind the other.

³ Stop. Hold up stick.

⁴ Point to tree.

SANTA CLAUS MAIDS

[*Tiny girls wearing sashes of red crepe paper, huge butterfly bows in back. Red garlands hang around necks. Red paper crowns on head. White dresses are effective.*]

Melody: *Good Morning to You*, GOLDEN BOOK OF
FAVORITE SONGS.

¹ We're Santa Claus Maids

² His colors we wear,

³ And some of his hard work

⁴ We'd just like to share.

¹ Our big Christmas bows

² Will please him, we know,

³ We wore them 'cause our love

⁴ We wanted to show.

¹ But we look so nice

² For Santa to see—

³ You don't s'pose he'll hang us

⁴ Up on the big tree!

FIRST STANZA.

¹ Deep bow.

² Point to sash, garland, crown in order named.

³⁻⁴ Hold out willing hands, palms up.

SECOND STANZA.

¹⁻² Turn back to audience.

³ Face audience.

⁴ Nod head vigorously.

THIRD STANZA.

¹⁻² Pretend to adjust crown.

³ Clasp hands in alarm.

⁴ Point to tree with right hand.

THE WATCHERS

SMALL CHILDREN IN PAJAMAS OR NIGHTGOWNS

*[Sung slowly in mysterious tones.]**Melody: Row, Row, Row Your Boat, GOLDEN BOOK OF FAVORITE SONGS.*¹ Hark! Old Santa Claus,² And his gay reindeer,³ Ting-a-ling, ting-a-ling,*[Repeat this line.]*⁴ Far-off bells we hear.¹ Now he's on the roof,² Yes, he's going to stop!³ Pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat,*[Repeat.]*⁴ Oh, the chimney top!¹ Quick! Quick! let us run,² Not a word be said!³ Tip-a-toe, tip-a-toe,*[Repeat.]*⁴ Softly off to bed.**FIRST STANZA.**¹ Right hand behind ear.² Shake right forefinger at audience.³ Shake fists up and down in time to music as if shaking bells.⁴ Listening attitude. Right forefinger up.**SECOND STANZA.**¹ Point upward. Same finger.² Clap hands noiselessly.³ Pat heart in time to words.⁴ Look upward.

THIRD STANZA.

¹ Huddle into group, clasping hands.

² Finger at lips.

³⁻⁴ Tiptoe off stage.

DECORATIONS

FOR SIX, NINE, OR TWELVE GIRLS

[Girls 1-4-7, etc., carry long red garlands. Girls 2-5-8, etc., carry holly wreaths. Girls 3-6-9, etc., carry big red candles.]

Melody: First part of *The Dearest Spot*, GOLDEN BOOK OF FAVORITE SONGS.

¹ The Christmas time has come at last

² With things of cheer,

³ We'll put them up 'til it has passed

⁴ With the Old Year.

¹ You'll see the garland, gleaming red,

² Upon the wall;

³ The holly wreath hung overhead

⁴ In splendor tall.

¹ And at the last, oh! don't forget

² The candle bright,

³ In some big window have it set

⁴ On Christmas Night.

FIRST STANZA.

¹⁻² Hold up decorations.

³⁻⁴ Lower to front, holding with both hands.

SECOND STANZA.

¹⁻² Garland Girls step out three steps. Arms extended to right and left and lifted upwards slightly. Girls' uplifted hands touch neighbors.

³⁻⁴ Holly Girls step forward into spaces between Garland Girls. Kneel, holding holly wreath up toward Garland Girls' hands, but not close enough to touch the garlands.

THIRD STANZA.

- ¹⁻² Candle Girls step forward. Stand directly behind Holly Girls and hold candles in centers of wreaths. Bottoms of candles are covered by bottoms of wreaths. This forms a pretty picture of draped red garlands, green holly set in the frame created by the garlands and red candles. Practice holding decorations at various angles until an artistic and picturesque effect has been obtained.

Dialogues in Rhyme

THE SPELLING BEE

NINE SMALL CHILDREN, EACH ONE REPRESENTING ONE LETTER
OF THE WORD GREETINGS

[The letters are of red on a white background. An older child is dressed as a Santa Claus Schoolmaster. Add spectacles and a ruler to the usual Santa dress. Children come dancing onto stage and form a straight line across center of stage. The letters are all mixed up, and are held at right side until the time for spelling comes.]

CHILDREN.

A spelling bee! A spelling bee!
A strange one now you're going to see.

SCHOOLMASTER SANTA [*severely*].

Watch your p's and mind your q's,
And just a little care please use.
I'd truly feel disgraced today,
If the wrong letters you should say.
Now, what do the bells on Christmas do?

[Letters R-I-N-G step quickly out and form in order. Practice until correct order is formed instantly. The capitalized letters in the following lines are not to be spoken. Instead the children hold up their cards at that point in the sentence. Then quickly return to place in line. All other words are spelled in the same manner, with the same order of procedure.]

LETTERS [*spoken only by those out front*].

The bells on Christmas RING. [*Back in place.*]

SCHOOLMASTER SANTA.

How do the children show their joy?

LETTERS [*out*].

They dance and skip and SING. [*Back.*]

SCHOOLMASTER SANTA.

Of what was Billy's new horn made?

LETTERS.

His horn was made of TIN.

SCHOOLMASTER SANTA.

When Billy saw it did he smile?

LETTERS.

He wore the biggest GRIN.

SCHOOLMASTER SANTA.

What happens to bad boys and girls?

LETTERS.

No presents do they GET.

SCHOOLMASTER SANTA.

Does Mary want a nice, new doll?

LETTERS.

She wants a pink tea SET.

SCHOOLMASTER SANTA.

And now what do you want to say

To all these good folks here?

ALL LETTERS.

GREETINGS—to you for Christmas Day

And for the glad New Year.

CAREFUL GIVERS

TWO SMALL GIRLS ARE SEATED IN CHAIRS, SEWING INDUSTRIOUSLY ON CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

FIRST.

I've sewed this long hem three times now,
And yet it won't go straight;

I'm giving it to Auntie Jane,
So it must be first rate.

SECOND.

That's why I'm so careful, too,
My gift's for my Aunt May;
I want it to be 'zackly right
For her on Christmas Day.

BOTH.

And so we put the stitches in,
And then we take them out;
You may think we're wasting time,
But we know what we're 'bout.

THE HOLLY'S SECRET

FOR SIX SMALL CHILDREN

[Each child holds a holly wreath cut from green paper with red berries pasted on. Children enter in single file, holding wreaths in right hand. Face front and holding wreaths before face look through them at audience.]

ALL.

Merry Christmas faces
We're glad to show today,
Happy smiles and twinkling eyes
Are part of our display. *[Lower wreaths to side.]*

FIRST *[mysteriously]*.

Our holly learned a secret as
The clock was striking nine;

SECOND.

But we found out and so we smile,
It made us feel so fine. *[All put thumbs in armpits.]*

THIRD.

Now out with the great secret—
It's nothing more or less,

FOURTH.

Than that the holly saw St. Nick,
In all his Christmas dress.

FIFTH.

Saw him at the chimney place,
Looking up the flue.

SIXTH.

The holly was no nervous it
Knew scarcely what to do.

ALL.

But oh! the news has made us glad,
We know he's on the way,
And that we'll get our presents now
On [*Hold wreaths before face.*] Merry Christmas Day.

THE ROAD TO SANTAVILLE

TINY GIRL WEARING COAT AND CAP. OLDER GIRL SEATED IN
ROCKER AND DRESSED AS GREY-HAIRED LADY. THE
OTHER STANDS BY HER SIDE.

SMALL GIRL.

Will you tell me how old Santa
Can be found right at his home?

OLDER.

Oh, far up toward the cold North Pole
For days you'd have to roam.

SMALL GIRL.

And are there sign posts on the road
To tell me the right way?

OLDER.

You'll see his reindeer by the trail,
I've heard the others say.

SMALL GIRL.

But Santa's house—how will it look?
Will it be made of gold?

OLDER.

Oh, no, it's all of rainbow ice,
I've many times been told.

SMALL GIRL.

How will I get into the house?
Should I just ring the bell?

OLDER [*shaking finger*].

Now that is a big secret that
I'm not allowed to tell.

SMALL GIRL [*buttons coat and puts on mittens*].

Well, I am off to the North Pole,
Old Santa I must see,
Thank you so much [*Courtesys.*] for all the help
That you've just given me.

THE LOST TRIMMINGS

FOR FOUR LITTLE GIRLS

[*Miscellaneous pieces of furniture are on stage including a chair with a cushion on it. First speaker enters hurriedly. Looks around.*]

FIRST.

My star! My star! Where is my star?
It's time for me to speak,
But I must find my silver star,
Though it should take a week.
[*Hunts around for star.*]

SECOND [*rushing in*].

I've lost my wreath—my holly wreath,
The program now has started;
If I'd known this, that wreath and I
Would never once have parted. [*Hunts.*]

THIRD [*rushes in*].

Where is my candle? Who can tell?

I had it once today.

Without it my four Christmas lines

I'll never dare to say.

FOURTH [*rushes in*].

Oh, help me find my tinsel, please,

For when I speak, you see,

I take my shining tinsel strands

And wind them on the tree.

FIRST.

A lesson this will be for me,

Never so careless again to be.

[*All continue to hunt around while speaking.*]

SECOND.

If my mind weren't in such a whirl,

I'd help you, poor distracted girl.

THIRD.

What will folks say when we come late?

And that we'll be at this sad rate!

FOURTH.

"Better late than never" by far!

{*Lifts cushion from chair.*}

Oh, look! I've found them! Here they are!

[*All rush to chair and snatch out possession. Form in straight line and march to front of stage, holding up object searched for.*]

ALL.

What relief we feel right now!

We're ready to begin.

So off we'll go on speedy toe

After this dreadful din. [*Run off.*]

THREE ANIMALS BOLD

THREE SMALL BOYS, EACH CARRYING THE LARGEST-SIZED ANIMAL HE CAN OBTAIN OF THE ONES NAMED IN THE FOLLOWING ORDER

FIRST.

Last Christmas Santa brought this dog,
Now when I go to bed,
I'm not afraid for my dog's there,
And no more need be said.

SECOND.

When it's too rainy for a walk,
My trusty horse I call,
And then a long and dangerous ride
I take—out in the hall.

THIRD.

This elephant I've taught some tricks,
But I can't show them now,
'Cause he's so bashful out in crowds
He daren't make a bow.

ALL.

If this year Santa does as well
In bringing us our toys,
We need not tell you that we'll be
Three happy little boys.

CHRISTMAS HOPES

FOUR TINY CHILDREN

FIRST.

I hope I have lots of presents
On the sparkly Christmas tree.

SECOND.

I hope dear Santa won't forget
Those cups I want for tea.

THIRD.

I hope I get enough popcorn
Is all I have to say.

FOURTH.

I hope you'll all be happy
The whole of Christmas Day.

THE GUIDING STAR

FIVE GIRLS IN WHITE WITH SILVER CROWNS ON HEADS

[A large silver star has been divided into five parts. Each girl carries one part. A holder of some sort is fastened on back of each part of star. A strip of paper pasted at each end so that hand may be slipped through is easy to make. Girls stand in semi-circle.]

FIRST.

Do you know what led the Wise Men,
On that night of long ago?

SECOND.

It was a guiding silver star,
My mamma has said so.

THIRD.

Bright and brighter there it glowed,
Up in the clear night sky.

FOURTH.

And that was why the Wise Men three
Came quickly riding by.

FIFTH.

They found the spot where Jesus lay,
These Wise Men from afar,

ALL *[step together and put parts of star in place to form whole, while speakers are grouped behind star as much as possible.]*

While up above in beauty bright
Shone on that wondrous star.

[Holding position, the chorus of "We Three Kings of Orient Are" is sung softly.]

AN UNUSUAL IDEA

THREE BOYS AND THREE GIRLS, EACH CARRYING TOY NAMED
AND HOLDING UP WHEN SPEAKING FOR AUDIENCE TO SEE

FIRST BOY.

This poor, old, battered gun of mine
Could once squirt water fast and fine.

FIRST GIRL.

My dolly used to talk and smile,
But now, not for the longest while.

SECOND BOY.

An engine I was glad to get,
It's pretty useful even yet.

SECOND GIRL.

This little bed has lost a leg,
Don't think I broke it, please, I beg.

THIRD BOY.

The stunts this dog could do when wound
Not even in a show are found.

THIRD GIRL.

Oh, how I loved to pour hot tea
Into these cups 'fore I broke three.

BOYS.

But the real reason why we're here
You'll very shortly from us hear.

GIRLS.

Indeed, yes, it's unusual, too,
The wish we're going to tell to you.

ALL.

But truth to tell, we're here today
To very quickly, plainly say,
That all we want for Christmas Day
Is—our old toys in new array.

So all that Santa needs to do,
Is bring a hammer and some glue,
And soon we hope they'll be like new

[*Hold toys high.*]

For us on Christmas Day.

THE HIDING PLACE

[*Billy, Jane, Jack and Mother are the characters. Table and chair are on state. The chair is the roomy kind with a big cushion on seat.*]

BILLY [*enters carrying Christmas present all be-ribboned and pretty*].

This Christmas gift for mother

Is getting on my nerves,

Such worry and discomfort

Is more than one deserves.

A good safe place to hide it

I've looked for everywhere;

There seems to be no other—so

I'll put it 'neath this chair.

[*Tucks gift under cushion.*]

JANE [*enters just as Billy makes his exit*].

Now mother's gift is wrapped,

And tied with ribbon green,

But a safe place to hide it

I haven't so far seen.

Perhaps this spot will answer,

Oh, well, I'll put it there,

Mother will never think to look

Beneath this cushioned chair. [*Exit.*]

JACK [*also carrying gift as he enters*].

A hiding place! A hiding place!

I've searched both high and low,

Some are too large and some too small

For this sized gift to go.

Ah-ha! I have a brilliant thought!

Here's a nice, roomy chair,

No one will think of looking—so

I'll simply leave it there. [*Exit.*]

MOTHER [*enters wiping hands on apron*].

Dear me! I am so tired!

The turkey and the pie

Are done, and of the other things

There is a good supply.

But what a strain it is! [*Sinks into chair.*]

I really—well! dear me!

This cushion's not as easy as

It always used to be. [*Rises. Lifts cushion.*]

Presents! "For mother"—the children's writing!

They must have put them here,

Knowing that I would find them soon

And be surprised—how dear!

I'll open them right now, and then—

[*As she seizes packages the children rush in.*]

CHILDREN.

Mother! Don't dare to look! [*Each takes own gift.*]

JANE.

To think she found them right away.

JACK.

Not even a minute she took.

MOTHER.

Why, children, I thought you put them here

Just as a big surprise.

BILLY.

No, mother, you're wrong. We took it for

A hiding place in disguise.

CHILDREN.

Alas! Alack! Now here we are, [*Hold out gifts.*]

The same as we were before;

But come, there's somewhere a good, safe place

On ceiling, wall or floor. [*Hurry off with gifts.*]

AN OLD-FASHIONED SOUND

SIX SPEAKERS WITH A CHORUS OFF-STAGE

[Bells sound faintly off-stage during speaking.]

FIRST.

In the frosty air of night
I hear a merry jingling,

SECOND.

That dear, old-fashioned Christmas sound
Of sleigh bells gaily tingling.

THIRD.

Now nearer rings their music out,
Along the frosty dells,

FOURTH.

And up the valley road they come,
The peals of old-time bells.

FIFTH.

So on they speed against the wind,
O'er trails all diamond set,

SIXTH.

And through the night the echoes ring
In tingling chorus met.

*[Chorus of "Jingle Bells" is sung faintly in the distance.
Speakers remain in position until singing dies away.]*

STREETS AND WINDOWS

FOR TEN SMALL CHILDREN

ALL.

Why do we know the Yuletide's here?
Oh, there are countless signs;
You can't look up or down the street
Without the best designs.

FIRST.

For instance, there's the tinsel show
On all the gay store trees;

SECOND.

And there's the windows all toy-decked
The passers-by to please.

THIRD.

Let's stop here by the market place—
Ten turkeys in a row! [*Holds up ten fingers.*]

FOURTH.

It really seems that here's the spot
Where all the good things grow.

FIFTH.

If they put even half those things
Upon the Christmas table—

SIXTH.

We'll all be eating 'til its dark,
Or long as we are able.

SEVENTH.

But now, on to the Toyland Shop,
Behold the kangaroo!

EIGHTH.

And look at this dreadful tiger which
In deepest jungles grew.

NINTH.

Lucky they're only stuffed, for they
Look hungry as can be.

TENTH.

I wouldn't want a one of them
To make a meal of me.

ALL.

So there are some of the signs of the times,
If more you'd like to see
Stroll up the street and there you'll meet
With others three times three.

CONFESSIONS

FOR SIX SMALL BOYS

ALL.

Six small boys before you stand,
Secrets we would tell;
Now, listen, for they'll show you quite
How naughty boys rebell.

FIRST.

I'm sorry that I said last year,
Santa never got orders clear.

SECOND.

I'm sorry that I shrieked and cried
When no new engine I espied.

THIRD.

I'm sorry that I kicked the tree
Because there was no gun for me.

FOURTH.

I'm awful sorry I made a face
When I saw my presents in their place.

FIFTH.

I'm sorry I said that Santa dear
Made more mistakes with every year.

SIXTH.

I'm sorry that last Christmas Day
I pouted, cried and wouldn't play.

ALL.

Confession, they say, is good for the soul;
We really feel much better,
And this year we'll keep the Christmas Spirit
Up to the very last letter.

Costume Specialties

SWITCHES AND STOCKINGS

CHARACTERS

SANTA JIM

SANTA CLAUS

SANTA JACK

MARY

JANE

[*The two small boys, Santa Jim and Santa Jack, are dressed as Santa. A larger boy, Santa Claus, is also dressed in the proverbial red. The girls are in pajamas or night-gowns. There is an improvised fireplace.*]

Enter Mary and Jane carrying stockings.

MARY. What a dreadful thing it would be, Jane, if we had the same thing happen to us that happened to Clarabell last Christmas!

JANE. Oh, what was that, Mary?

MARY [*in awed tones*]. Why, all year long she had been the best of a girl, and then what do you think happened on Christmas morning? She found only a switch in her stocking!

JANE [*horrified*]. Good the whole year and then get a switch! Dear me! Dear me! What is Santa coming to?

MARY. It simply ruined her Christmas and I've been worried this whole year. [*Hangs up stocking.*] But I suppose I'll just have to trust to luck and make the best of it if Santa decides I need a switch.

JANE. You've certainly given me a fright. I don't believe I shall sleep a wink. I could never look anyone in the face

if I ever got a switch in my stocking on Christmas morning. [*Hangs stocking.*]

MARY. There! Now suppose we hurry off to bed so that Santa will not have any reason to suspect us or think we are trying to peep. [*They hurry out.*]

Enter Santa Jack. He carries an armful of switches.

SANTA JACK. Ah! Two young ladies won't be pleased with the gifts I'm going to leave them. This makes the tenth stocking I've filled tonight. [*Puts switches into stockings.*] I wish I could be around in the morning to hear the crying. I know I'd split my sides laughing. I'd— [*Footsteps are heard.*] My gracious! There's someone coming! Oh, my goodness, where can I hide! [*Scurries behind a chair.*]

Enter Santa Jim, also with an armful of switches.

SANTA JIM [*examining stockings*]. What's this? What's this? Switches in the stockings already. Now, who can be doing this? Who's stealing all my fun? [*Santa Jack creeps out.*]

SANTA JACK. Hello, there! [*Santa Jim drops his armful of switches in his fright.*]

SANTA JIM. Mercy on me! Where did you pop from? I thought I was alone.

SANTA JACK. No, you're not alone, and it's just as well. "Two's company" they say. I see you're up to all of my old tricks. [*Points at switches.*]

SANTA JIM. Yes, isn't it great to fill up all the stockings with switches when they are all expecting so much. Dolls, cars—

SANTA JACK. Guns, balls, blocks, engines, horses. Oh, there's no end to what they're expecting. And this— [*He points to stockings full of switches.*]

BOTH. This is what they get! [*Both laugh hilariously, bending over and holding stomachs.*]

SANTA JIM. Oh! Oh! It's the funniest thing I ever heard of!

VOICE. Oh, it is, is it?

Enter Santa Claus carrying a huge pack on his back.

[*Both imitation Santas with shrieks of "Santa Claus! Santa Claus!" start to run, but Santa drops his pack, runs after them, and grabs both by collar.*]

SANTA CLAUS [*fiercely*]. Oh, you villains! You little rascals! So you have been causing me all this trouble. I've been getting so many complaints about switches, switches, switches, and I knew as well as anything that I never in all my life left a switch. How long has this been going on? [*Shaking both vigorously.*]

BOTH [*meekly*]. Two years, sir!

SANTA CLAUS [*in loud tones of dismay*]. Two years! Think of that! It's a wonder my reputation isn't ruined, completely ruined. I should have you locked up right, but no—there is something more important. Take those switches out of those stockings right this second. [*The boys quickly remove the switches and Santa begins putting toys into the stockings.*] As soon as I get these stockings filled do you know what you're going to do? You're going to show me the way to every stocking into which you've put switches this night. After that I'll see what I'll do to you. There, now I'm ready! And, now, just to keep you out of mischief, you two shall carry my sack. [*Exit all three, the two imitation Santas staggering under the heavy load of Santa's sack.*]

THE RUNAWAY STOCKINGS**CHARACTERS**

BIG RED STOCKING LITTLE WHITE STOCKING

SANTA CLAUS

[Semblance of a fireplace fastened to a low curtain strung across stage. Red and white stockings are hanging at fireplace. The speakers are concealed behind.]

RED STOCKING. Ho! Hum! Santa is late to-night.

WHITE STOCKING. The business gets bigger every year.

RED STOCKING. How does it happen that Sarah May hung you up tonight? I thought she was going to borrow one of my master's stockings.

WHITE STOCKING. Oh, she happened to think that all the presents she had asked Santa for were small: a ring, an ivory comb and a gold pencil.

RED STOCKING. Well, all I hope is that Santa doesn't try to put all the things Master James asked for inside of me. I'll have indigestion if he does. Imagine swallowing a steam engine, a drum, a tricycle and a pair of boots!

WHITE STOCKING. I suppose we won't last long after Christmas.

RED STOCKING. Why so?

WHITE STOCKING. Oh, they say Christmas stockings never live long after the day is over. I suppose it comes from all the excitement and everything.

RED STOCKING. Oh, no doubt. Strains one's heart, I suppose. But, long or short, I wish Santa would come. The poor soul must be getting old. He never took this long before.

WHITE STOCKING. What do you say if we go and look for him, Red Stocking?

RED STOCKING. A capital idea! Should we start at once?

WHITE STOCKING. At once, if we're going to do any good.

[*Stockings move across curtain and off-stage, propelled of course, by speakers behind. Enter Santa Claus who goes over to fireplace.*]

SANTA [*peering around*]. Strange! Most unusual! No stockings! There are always stockings at this fireplace. I can't understand it. Well, I never leave gifts when I find no stockings. So I'll hurry along. [*He is making his exit when the stockings hurriedly return.*]

STOCKINGS. Oh, Santa! Dear Santa Claus! Wait! Wait!

SANTA [*returning*]. What now? Well, do my eyes tell me the truth? Where did you come from?

STOCKINGS [*shamefacedly*]. We were looking for you, sir. We thought you were late.

SANTA [*crossly*]. Well, never mind thinking I'm late. The idea! A second more and I'd have been gone. Now get into place at once so I can fill you up with wonderful toys. [*Fills stockings.*] Well, merry Christmas, Stockings. Don't ever run away again.

STOCKINGS. Merry Christmas, Santa! This is the last time we'll ever be runaway stockings. [*Exit Santa.*]

CURTAIN

WINTER'S TREASURE BASKET

CHARACTERS

SPRING

AUTUMN

SUMMER

WINTER

COSTUMES

[SPRING is in green with leaf decorations and flowing draperies. SUMMER in pink with flowers on dress. AUTUMN wears red with yellow and orange leaves. WINTER is in

gloomy black with no trimming to relieve the gloom. Each carries a basket.]

Enter Spring, Summer and Autumn.

SPRING. To think we should meet in this way! It's been years since I've seen you, Autumn.

AUTUMN. Quite true, Spring. Now, I sometimes see Summer in the distance, though we hardly ever get near enough to speak.

SUMMER. Of course, Spring and I see more of each other than any other two seasons, I think.

SPRING. What have you in that basket, Autumn?

AUTUMN. Countless good things! All the Fall riches that appear in October and November. That's what I have in my basket.

SPRING and SUMMER. Just what we're carrying. [*Holds up baskets.*] The best things we bring in our seasons.

SUMMER. Should we open our baskets and show one another? I think it would be a delightful way of passing the time.

SPRING and AUTUMN. I'm willing. [*All seat themselves on floor.*]

AUTUMN. Have you seen poor old Winter around here? He's such a gloomy soul. Dark and down-hearted. But who wouldn't be if they had to lead the life he leads.

SUMMER. I wonder what he carries in his basket.

SPRING. Oh, it makes me shiver to think of it. Icicles, of course, for one thing.

AUTUMN. And cold winds and bare boughs.

SUMMER. And all the long, dark hours.

AUTUMN. Look! There's Winter, now.

Enter Winter gloomily, cap over eyes, coat buttoned high.

SPRING [*to SUMMER*]. Isn't he the saddest looking thing!

AUTUMN. Good day, Winter. Do you want to join our party? We're opening our baskets.

WINTER. I don't belong with this happy bunch. I'll only cast gloom on the party and probably you'll all catch cold, besides.

SPRING. There now! [*Pats his shoulder.*] Never mind! All the seasons can't be gay with bright colors, you know. Sit down here and do try to cheer up. [*Winter seats self but sits bent over with face covered with hands.*]

SUMMER. Spring, you're first. Show us your treasures.

SPRING [*opens basket and takes out a handful of green leaves and a blue veil. Springs to feet*]. Blue skies and bursting buds! Those are my dearest treasures. And beside that the softest of warm breezes that blow like this. [*Skips around stage waving blue veil above head with both hands up.*]

SUMMER and AUTUMN [*applauding*]. Delightful! Delightful!

SUMMER [*opens basket and takes out many beautiful flowers. Rises*]. I turn the world into a garden of flowers. There's no limit to the colors. [*Skips around stage scattering flowers.*] Sweet peas, marigolds, asters, bluebells. Oh, I could name hundreds and hundreds.

SPRING and AUTUMN [*applauding*]. Lovely! Lovely!

AUTUMN [*opens basket. Takes out glowing red apples. Rises*]. Bursting fruit on vines and trees! That's what I mean to the world, and best of them all is the apple the famous fruit that keeps the doctor away. [*Tosses apple into air and catches it.*] Here, have one, all of you. They look like rubies and taste a lot better, I know. Winter, would you like an apple? [*Throws apples to Spring and Summer.*]

WINTER [*lifting face*]. No—no, thank you. [*Heaves groan.*] Alas-s! And now it's my turn to open my basket. What a dreadful trial it is going to be!

OTHER SEASONS. Oh, no, it won't be so bad. Don't feel that way.

WINTER [*rebelliously*]. It will be impossible. I know it. Just impossible. [*Slowly opens basket.*] I think it's a shame and—[*Sits up suddenly*] —what's this? [*Takes out dazzling tinsel streamer.*] And this? [*Christmas tree ball.*] Oh, look here! [*Holly.*] And something else? [*Silver star.*] Am I dreaming? [*Small red Santa.*] Oh, now I am beginning to understand! Now, I understand. [*Takes out toys, candy cane, etc., in rapid succession while others cry "Beautiful! Beautiful!"*]

SUMMER [*shaking finger*]. How could you deceive us in that way?

SPRING. Why, Winter, your basket holds the most wonderful treasures of all.

AUTUMN. Yes, I think we'll have to agree. Winter wins the prize.

WINTER [*springing up*]. I was wrong! I was wrong! But it was all a mistake.

AUTUMN. There's just one thing for us to do and that is to give three cheers for Friend Winter and his basket. Now all together—

ALL [*except Winter*]. Rah! Rah! Rah! For Winter's Treasure Basket!

SECRETS OF SANTA'S SACK

CHARACTERS

JAPANESE DOLL

INDIAN DOLL

NEGRO DOLL

[*A red curtain four feet high and five feet wide is suspended in center of stage. It has the words SANTA'S*

SACK *in big white letters on it. Protruding from the top are the heads and shoulders of the dolls, as well as other toys—drums, guns, engines, etc.—some of which are held by the dolls and others by extras who kneel behind the curtain out of sight. Be sure the curtain reaches to the floor so that no feet show. The Indian Doll wears the usual dress and is bright with beads. The Japanese Doll wears a pink kinmona with pink flowers in hair. The Negro Doll wears a bright green dress and a turban of red.]*

INDIAN. Who says that people of different countries can not get along? Here I am and here are you two, and we're getting along lovely.

JAPANESE. It's the spirit of Christmas. Everyone feels friendly to all the world.

NEGRO. A 'hm sure I'm feeling Christmasy. Lawsy massy, yes! If you-all wasn't here, I'd be singin' Glory Hally-lewjuh!

INDIAN. I feel happy enough to do a war dance.

JAPANESE and NEGRO. War dance!

INDIAN [*dismayed*]. Oh, excuse me! How terrible that sounded! I just meant I felt happy.

JAPANESE. I'll be sorry to leave such good company. But Sally Lund will be so pleased that of course I can't complain.

NEGRO. Sally Lund—did you-all say? Well, if that ain't the beatenest! My little missy is named Lund, too—Nellie Lund.

INDIAN. Very interesting. But still you must remember there are a great many Smiths, Jones and Browns in this world, and I imagine quite a few Lunds, too. But as you were saying, it is too bad we have to part. I feel quite downcast about it.

NEGRO. Who-all am you goin' to, Massa Indian? Who's goin' to be ownin' you?

INDIAN. I haven't been able to read the tag. It's on my back. Can you see it, Japanese Doll? [*Turns back.*]

JAPANESE [*reading*]. Grace Lund.

NEGRO. Lawsy! Lawsy! Well, that is the bestes' I ever heard. Mo' Lund than we-all knows what to do with.

JAPANESE. My Lund lives in Dixville, Kentucky.

OTHER TWO DOLLS. So does mine!

ALL. Why, we must be going to the same house!

INDIAN. Hurray! We won't have to part after all. Honestly, I do feel happy enough to do a war dance.

OTHER TWO DOLLS. Well, if you promise not to scalp us, we'll let you do it just as soon as we're unpacked. Now, all to sleep before Santa comes for we have a long, long journey before us. [*All close eyes and hang heads.*]

GIFTS AND GIFTS

CHARACTERS

FLOOR LAMP

BOX OF CANDY

[*The Floor Lamp wears a one-piece garment of any bright color. It is drawn in at ankles and neck with no outlet for arms. On the head a lamp shade is worn, coming down well over face. The Candy Box wears a long piece of cardboard front and back. The pieces are fastened together loosely at shoulders and sides. On the front piece there is a pretty picture pasted in one corner, and the words BEST CHRISTMAS CANDY across the cardboard. In lower corner are the words "5 lb."*]

CANDY [*looking Floor Lamp over from tip to toe and walking curiously all around other. Stops and shakes head in amazement*]. Well, for goodness sakes, what are you?

FLOOR LAMP [*haughtily*]. I'm a Christmas present.

CANDY. A Christmas present! Oh, no, I hope not. If you're a Christmas present, I'm a Christmas tree.

FLOOR LAMP. Yes, and what's more—I'm a useful Christmas present, too.

CANDY. Oh-h-h! So that's what you are! A useful Christmas present. I've heard about them before. Do they—do they all look like you?

FLOOR LAMP. Some do and some don't. [*Sharply.*]

CANDY [*aside*]. I'd give a dime if I could see some that don't. [*To Floor Lamp.*] Well, speaking about Christmas presents—take a look at me. How do I look! [*Struts around.*]

FLOOR LAMP. Very foolish!

CANDY [*stops short*]. Who looks foolish? Do you mean me?

FLOOR LAMP. Why, certainly. There's no one else here. You look foolish because you're exactly five pounds of foolishness. You couldn't look any different if you wanted to.

CANDY [*aghast*]. Well, of all the—[*Stops.*] Oh, I won't say it. I see now what the matter is. You're jealous, that's what you are. You know very well that a useful Christmas present can never be as welcome as a foolish one. So we won't argue any more.

FLOOR LAMP. No, we won't argue any more, but just as a last word I'd like to say that a present that will last years and years is surely to be preferred to one that is gone in a week.

CANDY [*aside*]. Years and years! Think of having that sit beside one for that long time. [*To Floor Lamp.*] "Gone in a week," did you say? Well, I hope not. If I'm not gone in a day I'll feel that I'm not all I've been advertised to be. But as you say, we'll end this argument. [*Presents begin to move off stage.*]

FLOOR LAMP. Yes, we'll end it at once.

CANDY. I don't intend to say another word.

FLOOR LAMP. And neither do I. I still think that I'm the best sort of a present.

CANDY [*voices floating back*]. I told you that—

FLOOR LAMP. It doesn't make any difference what you said. I said—[*Voices die away.*]

TEN LITTLE CANDLES

CHARACTERS

RED CANDLE

YELLOW CANDLE

BLUE CANDLE

DAISY DELL

OTHER CANDLES

[*Candles are in assorted colors. Garment is one-piece, reaching from neck to ankles and drawn in at both places. Arms are concealed. Tight-fitting yellow caps with peaks represent flames. Daisy Dell is dressed in ordinary clothes. A small table on which rests a toy telephone stands at one side.*]

CANDLES [*standing in semi-circle*].

We are the candles that soon will be
Lighting the great big Christmas tree.

RED CANDLE. I'm a red candle and red is one of the Christmas colors. Oh, I hope Daisy Dell puts me on the top-most branch.

YELLOW CANDLE. But I'm yellow. I look just like a flame from tip to toe. I want to be on the top of the tree.

BLUE CANDLE. Don't you think I am a cheerful color? Just like the summer skies. How would I look on the very, very top?

OTHER CANDLES. How would I look? How would I look? And me? And me? And me? [*Assign parts.*]

RED CANDLE. If only Daisy Dell would come. We would find out.

YELLOW CANDLE. Oh, but please remember we have run away from the Christmas box. We would never dare let Daisy Dell see us.

BLUE CANDLE. Hide! Hide! Here she comes! [*Candles run to back of stage and huddle into group, looking fearfully at entrance.*]

Enter Daisy Dell with a most businesslike air. She marches to the telephone and takes down receiver.

DAISY DELL. Reindeer 6468. . . . Hello, is this Santa? . . . This is Daisy Dell. Santa, I want to leave an order for a large silver star. I want it for the top of my Christmas tree. A beautiful sparkly star. I wouldn't think of putting anything else on the top of my tree. All right. Goodbye, Santa. [*Hangs up receiver. Exit.*]

CANDLES [*coming to front of stage*]. Well, now we know. Of course we had no business on top of the tree. What an idea! Come, let's get back to our box at once. [*Run from stage.*]

THE BATTLE OF THE COLORS

CHARACTERS

THREE RED CHRISTMAS FAIRIES

THREE GREEN CHRISTMAS FAIRIES

[*The Green Christmas Fairies are three small girls who are dressed in green and carry holly wreaths. The Red Christmas Fairies are three little boys, dressed in red and carrying red garlands. There is a chair, table or any furniture available to give the impression of a sitting room.*]

Enter Red Fairies.

FIRST RED. Ah-ha! We have the place to ourselves.

SECOND RED. Good! Now, let's get busy and make this room a work of art. [*All begin decorating.*]

THIRD RED [*holding up garland*]. Red—beautiful, glowing red—the real Christmas color. The only Christmas color!

VOICES [*off-stage*]. Oh, is that so? [*Green Fairies bounce onto stage.*] What's that we just heard?

FIRST GREEN. The only Christmas color. Indeed, and it's a thinking I am that you're color blind or something even worse. Let me examine your eyes, Red Fairy. I believe you need glasses.

SECOND GREEN. How about us, Red Fairies? You seem to forget we are green. [*All courtesy deeply.*]

THIRD GREEN. We'll give you a chance to take it back before we scold you.

THIRD RED. I won't take it back.

ALL REDS. No, indeed. [*The Green Fairies gather into a group, heads together, and confer. The Red Fairies nod at each other meaningly.*]

FIRST GREEN [*turning from consultation*]. Very well. We have decided to prove our point.

FIRST RED [*slapping garland onto table*]. You can't do it!

SECOND GREEN. Well, listen to this—[*Goes over and shakes finger under the other's nose.*] What color is a pine tree?

FIRST RED. It's—it's green.

THIRD GREEN. Are you sure it isn't red? [*First Red nods.*]

FIRST GREEN. What color is this holly wreath? [*Swings wreath before Red Fairies.*]

SECOND RED. It—it looks green.

SECOND GREEN. And what color are mistletoe leaves?

THIRD RED [*in exasperated tones*]. Well, green, of course. All leaves are green.

FIRST RED. Sure. What's that got to do with Christmas?

GREEN FAIRIES [*clapping hands*]. We've proven our point. Pine tree, holly, mistletoe—all are green. Green is the Christmas color. Green is the Christmas color. [*Join hands and dance around in ring.*]

FIRST RED [*desperately*]. But—wait! Wait! [*Green Fairies stop.*] What color are Christmas candles?

ALL GREEN FAIRIES. They're—they're red—mostly.

SECOND RED. Are you sure they aren't green? [*Green Fairies nod.*]

THIRD RED. What color is Santa's suit?

FIRST GREEN. Why, red, of course. What a silly question!

FIRST RED. What colors are the berries on your holly wreaths?

SECOND GREEN [*looking at wreath*]. They—they seem to be red.

RED FAIRIES. We've proven our point. Hurray! Candles, Santa, holly berries—all are red. Red is the Christmas color. Red is the Christmas color. [*Join hands and dance in ring.*]

FIRST GREEN FAIRY. Stop! [*They stop.*] We're all right and we're all wrong.

FIRST RED. What do you mean?

FIRST GREEN. I mean that red isn't the Christmas color and green isn't the Christmas color. We should say that red and green are the Christmas colors. [*They exchange glances.*]

ALL. She's right! She's right! Why, we've been fighting about nothing. Red and green! Red and green! They are the Christmas colors. [*Join hands, red next to green, so that there is a girl between each two boys, and dance gaily in ring.*]

SECOND RED [*as they stop*]. And so together let us make this room a work of art.

THIRD RED. Yes, together we'll put up the red—beautiful, glowing red, and green—bright, cheerful green—the—

ALL. Real Christmas colors! The only Christmas colors!

A WOODLAND SCANDAL

CHARACTERS

WOODCUTTER

PINE TREES

LAME CHILD

SNOW FAIRIES

[*Any number of children of assorted sizes may be the Pine Trees. Only three have speaking parts of any importance, but there should be a goodly number to give the impression of a forest. The dresses are made of dark green, a sack-like garment which covers head and arms and hangs to below the knees. It is covered with flounces of green crepe paper with widest flounces at bottom in imitation of pine tree boughs. The Snow Fairies are in white with gay tinsel decorating dresses and caps. The Woodcutter is in brown with leggings and a tight cap. The Lame Child wears a coat and cap and other winter apparel. Pine Trees must stand motionless, feet together.*]

BIG PINE. How cold the air feels! I believe it is getting near December. We haven't had any snow as yet, but if I'm not mistaken, there will be some today.

LITTLE PINE. Please don't talk to me about December. Oh, that terrible month! I have thought about it the whole year.

IN-BETWEEN PINE. And so have I! It is such a wonderful season and it means so many things.

LITTLE PINE. Oh, that isn't why I have thought about it—because it is wonderful. Quite the opposite, indeed.

BIG PINE. What are your reasons, Little Pine, if you don't mind airing your secrets?

LITTLE PINE [*slowly at first and then loudly and emphatically*]. Well—the—truth—of—the—matter—is: I don't want to be a Christmas tree!

ALL PINES IN FOREST. Oh! Oh! Oh!

LITTLE PINE. Yes. Oh, oh, oh. I knew you'd say that. But you needn't be so shocked. I'll not be a Christmas tree and be taken into a hot room and be covered with loads and loads of stuff. So there. That's that.

BIG PINE. You poor child! Don't you realize that that is why you're here; that is why pine trees spring from the earth—to be Christmas trees.

LITTLE PINE. Well, then I wish I'd sprung a little farther, and been a worth while tree like an oak or a poplar or a birch, instead of a squatty, little dark pine that grew just to be killed.

ALL PINES. Killed! Oh, never, never has there been such dreadful talk in our peaceful pine forest. Never, never since the first pine put out its first branches.

LITTLE PINE. That's what it amounts to, doesn't it? We die, don't we, after we're cut?

IN-BETWEEN PINE. Pine trees never die, Little Pine. Once you have been blessed with the Christmas Spirit you live on and on forever. Your needles may fall off, but your soul, your beautiful pine tree soul, will never perish.

BIG TREE. And then—but listen! Someone is coming! And now the air is colder than before! Oh, I know who it is.

ALL PINES. So do we! The Snow Fairies! The Snow Fairies!

IN-BETWEEN PINE. Silence! Not a word. Let no pine stir.

Enter Snow Fairies.

[Any number, although but four have speaking parts. The Fairies are singing and swaying in time to the music, and scattering with graceful arm movements the snow which they take from the bags or pouches hanging at the right side of each. The snow consists of cut paper and artificial snow.]

Melody: First part of *Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms*, GOLDEN BOOK OF FAVORITE SONGS.

FAIRIES [winding in and out between trees].

Pine Trees, we have come now to bid you awake,
The cold winds have been heard from the North;
From your long summer's sleep open wide your green eyes,
And glowing with beauty step forth.

FIRST SNOW FAIRY. What lovely trees! So straight and tall! How gracefully the tinsel will drape itself on such trees!

SECOND. Oh, this cozy, little tree! [*Touches Little Pine.*]
It looks as if it had grown straight just because it knew it was intended for a Christmas tree.

THIRD. But somehow it doesn't seem to sing in its branches the way the others do. It is such a quiet, sad, little pine.

FOURTH. Then leave the little pine tree to its dreams. Probably it does not want to be awakened as yet. [*Exit Snow Fairies scattering snow and singing as before, using same melody.*]

Pine trees, do you know that the hour has arrived
When o'er all lands far out to the seas,
You and all of your brothers are soon to become
Gleaming, toy-laden, gay Christmas trees?

[*Exit Fairies. At once Fourth Fairy stealthily re-enters. Goes quickly to Little Pine and kneels beside it.*]

FOURTH FAIRY. I know your secret, Little Pine. I know why your branches do not sing. You are sad because you do not want to be a Christmas tree.

LITTLE PINE [*sadly*]. You have guessed, Snow Fairy. I do not want to be a Christmas tree. I do not want to leave this lovely valley where the wind hums in the summer and the birds call as they pass in great clouds above my head and the grass and flowers come and play at my feet. And the evening star! Oh, how I shall miss the evening star!

FAIRY [*firmly*]. And you shall not leave! Hark! A woodcutter! I will protect you. No ax can harm you while I am here. [*Hides behind trees at back of stage.*]

Enter the Woodcutter pulling a sled upon which is seated the Lame Child.

LAME CHILD. Papa! Oh, see the trees! Big ones! Little ones! Oh, but I want a little one, and here's the best one of all. Cut it down for my Christmas tree, papa. [*Points to Little Pine.*]

WOODCUTTER [*takes out ax*]. That I will! Just sit still, now, and don't get those little feet uncovered or we'll have the doctor again. [*Hacks at tree.*] This is the toughest pine I ever saw! And such a small tree! I can't even make a dent in it. [*Looks at blade.*] I sharpened this ax just yesterday. [*Hacks again.*] A very stubborn, little tree! [*Stops.*] Well, we must find another.

LAME CHILD. No, no! Not another! Only this one will do. It is so straight and strong. That is why I want it. Because, do you know how I feel, papa? I feel as if I, too, would grow straight and strong if I had it in my room and could see it all the time. Straight and tall, just as this little pine is.

WOODCUTTER. It is too bad, but we must find another for it is getting late and soon it will be dark. I think I see another over on the hill that looks nice and straight. [*Exit with child looking back at tree.*]

LITTLE PINE [*softly*]. Snow Fairy!

SNOW FAIRY [*arises and comes out*]. What is it, Little Pine?

LITTLE PINE. I—I—don't think I'd mind being a Christmas tree, Snow Fairy.

SNOW FAIRY. Oh, wouldn't you, Little Pine?

LITTLE PINE. No, you—you see, I've changed my mind.

SNOW FAIRY. I am so glad, Little Pine. And now you shall have a star of your own. You will not miss the evening star for high on the tip of your crown you will have a beautiful, sparkling silver star all your own. But I must hurry after my companions. Goodbye, Little Pine. Goodbye and—good luck. [*Exit Snow Fairy.*]

Re-enter the Woodcutter and Lame Child.

WOODCUTTER. This does seem to be the best tree. I'll try again. Probably this time I'll have better luck.

CHILD. Listen to the song the pines are singing! And my little one, oh, it is singing loudest of all!

WOODCUTTER [*hacks*]. Good! It cuts as easy as paper this time. It doesn't seem possible it can be the same tree.

CHILD. Catch it, papa. Catch it before it falls into the snow.

WOODCUTTER. I'll carry it to the big sled and then I'll come back for you. [*Carries tree from stage. Returns.*]

CHILD [*as they leave stage*]. I feel stronger already, papa. It must be the little pine that is helping me. [*Exit.*]

ALL PINES. Goodbye, Little Pine.

BIG PINE. What a dear, little pine it was! And how we shall miss it! But it goes to greater glory than we shall know—to sparkling lights, and laughing children, and a wonderful tinsel dress and colors and happiness. It is a lucky, little pine!

CURTAIN

Drills

MARCH OF THE CHRISTMAS HOURS

FOR TWELVE GIRLS NINE OR TEN YEARS OLD

They are dressed in black with white caps. On caps are sprigs of holly and a band of red around edges. A little red bell is firmly fastened to the top of each cap, upside down. Each girl carries a pasteboard clock face. The clock face is made of pasteboard, white, with black Roman numerals and black hands, and is about ten inches in diameter.

Enter singing and swinging clock faces back and forth in front of body in imitation of a pendulum. Swing in time to music. To left, 1-2. To right, 3-4, etc. Pass around stage and up across front, facing audience. March, sing and swing briskly.

Melody: Work, for the Night is Coming, GOLDEN BOOK OF FAVORITE SONGS.

We are the hours of Christmas.
Which one would you pick?
All of us are fleeting,
Tick, tock, tick, tock, tick.
Filled to the brim with pleasure,
Sour faces will not stick;
Gloom we send a-flying—
Tick, tock, tick, tock, tick.

While piano plays same melody again children perform these movements.

Clocks held at arms' length. Out, 1-2-3-4. Back, 1-2-3-4. Heads nod from left to right. Left, 1-2. Right, 3-4. Position, 1-2-3-4.

Clock faces high above heads. Up, 1-2-3-4. Down, 1-2-3-4.

Pendulum movement. Left, 1-2. Right, 3-4. Left, 1-2. Position, 1-2-3-4.

Turn face toward partner but do not move feet. Clock face covering own face at same time. 1-2-3-4.

Clock face down. 1-2-3-4.

Turn back to audience. Clock face covering own again. 1-2-3-4.

Clock face down. 1-2-3-4.

Held at arms' length. Out, 1-2-3-4. Back, 1-2-3-4.

Pendulum movement. Left, 1-2. Right, 3-4.

Position. 1-2-3-4.

March around stage, singing following and swinging clock faces only at words "Tick, tock, etc." As marching continues, leader should gradually wind inward so that when song is finished the singers are formed into a large circle, all facing toward center.

Oh, please use us freely,
Tick, tock, tick, tock, toe;
Don't waste a shining moment,
All too soon we go.
We are the hours of Christmas,
Here in a shining row.
Come! let's get acquainted.
Tick, tock, tick, tock, toe.

Standing in circle, facing inward, repeat all of former movements performed while facing audience. Leader then leads way around stage and off, all swinging clock faces all the way. Be sure in presenting this drill that all participants swing in the same direction and in time.

SNOWBALL BABIES

Very small children all in white pajamas with white hoods. Each carries a big, white ball. Balls are made of cotton batting covered with muslin. All necessary directions are called from off stage.

Holding balls in arms Snowball Babies march on stage to lively music which continues throughout, around stage and to back. At back, halt and face front. All abreast, put balls down and roll them to front. Pick up balls and continue marching around stage once, then across front and, turning at front corner, march diagonally to opposite back corner. Then across back. Halt. All face front. March forward abreast. Halt. Put balls down. Get down on knees. Pretend to be gathering snow, patting and rounding balls, rolling them around. Divide into two groups presently. Take balls to each side of stage. Put balls together to form a snow fortress behind which Snowball Babies kneel and hide. A battle ensues in which players pretend to be throwing snowballs. As battle waxes more exciting, they pick up the cotton balls and begin throwing them. As battle ends each one picks up a ball—any ball—and leader starts around stage, others falling in. Marches to back, across back, and abreast to front. A low bow is made and then all together the Snowball Babies hurl their balls into the audience and run from the stage.

THE BUGLER BOYS

Any number of small boys in red suits with long trousers, with red cockade hats and green sashes. Red bells are fastened to the ends of the sashes. If preferred, only the hats and sashes need be used, or the hats alone. Toy horns are used.

Enter in double file to sound of lively march. Horns are held under right arm and mouth-piece is toward front. Horns are held this way in all cases when not being blown. Bugler Boys march across front, down side to back, half-way across back. Turn toward front at this point. March to front. Horns lifted to mouths and tooted four times in time to eight beats of music. Horns down. Marching never

ceases during tooting. At front, two files separate, going to opposite corners, down sides to back, and across back until leaders meet. Face front. Forward march, four counts. Halt. Blow horns four times. Every other boy steps forward four steps. Boys out front blow horns. Backward march to places. Same procedure with other boys. Leaders now step out of line and march toward front. Others fall in behind. At front separate again and as before march to sides and around to center back, and in double file to front. Halt. Sing this song. At words "Toot, toot," singers blow horns.

Melody: Chorus of *Dixie*, GOLDEN BOOK OF
FAVORITE SONGS.

Oh, dear Santa, did you just hear?

Toot, toot! Toot, toot!

Our notes we blow so that you'll know,

' We've waited for a whole year.

Toot, toot! Toot, toot!

Just hear our bugles singing,

Toot, toot! Toot, toot!

While Christmas bells are ringing.

Repeat all movements from beginning, and when the time comes to sing use these new words to the same melody.

¹ I believe that he has heard us,

² Toot, toot! Toot, toot!

³ He's on his way for the glad day

⁴ That has so deeply stirred us.

⁵ Toot, toot! Toot, toot!

⁶ What's that I hear a-scambling?

⁷ Toot, toot! Toot, toot!

⁸ Can it be Santa rambling?

Act out the lines of this stanza as follows.

¹ Left hand cupped behind left ear.

² Blow horns.

³ Shake horns at audience.

⁴ Swing horns in circle gaily.

⁵ Blow horns.

⁶ Left hand behind ear and look toward ceiling.

⁷ Blow horns.

⁸ Exchange glances.

In double file, and while march music is played, pass around stage and off, blowing horns vigorously entire time.

CANDLE CAPERS

FOR TWELVE CHILDREN OF UNIFORM SIZE

Three are in red, three in green, three in yellow, three in blue. Straight sack-like garments drawn in at neck with no outlet for arms. Yellow caps on heads ending in tall peaks. Peaks are tied in close to heads to make them look like flames. Sew red tips on tops of peaks. Across front of stage are set twelve pasteboard boxes about four inches deep and one and one-half foot square. They are covered with black paper. The side of each box facing audience is decorated with a holly design of red berries and green leaves. Each box has a big black handle such as old-fashioned candle holders had. A strip of black drawing paper makes this handle very easily. All handles are turned toward right side of stage. March music 4-4 time.

Enter Candles in color order named in groups of three. March around stage and around again in single file. At back face front and march forward three abreast. Red Candles march first. Then blue, etc. Each group does not start marching until members of group are in position directly behind group ahead which has already marched up. Mark time with feet until ready to march and after reaching position up front. Mark time until all Candles are standing in place. Candles should be well spaced, not crowded, and not too close to front. Halt.

Sing following to melody of first half of *Wearing of the Green*, GOLDEN BOOK OF FAVORITE SONGS. At words "Sputter, sputter, etc.," move flames back and forth in time to words. Left, right, left, right, etc.

Oh, Candles, do you know the meaning
Of those holders there?

They tell us that the Christmas garb
We soon are doomed to wear.
We'll sputter, sputter, sputter on
The gleaming Christmas tree,
And soon no more tall candles all so
Straight and fine we'll be.

Oh, Candles should we run away and
Save our precious lives?
Should we out into the cold world where
The frowning Ice King drives?
For we'll sputter, sputter, sputter on
The gleaming Christmas tree,
And soon no more tall candles all so
Straight and fine we'll be.

In time to march music, 4-4 time, Candles do these movements.

Bow. Down, 1-2-3-4. Up, 1-2-3-4.

Position, 1-2-3-4.

Left face, 1-2-3-4.

Bow. Same count as above.

Position. Same.

Left face. Same.

Continue left face movement until Candles have turned completely around, and last bow is made when facing audience once more. In facing toward left, swing on ball of right foot and move left foot into position beside it. When through facing all should be standing on same spot as when starting.

Position, 1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4, or to end of musical phrase.

Sidewise bend to left. Down, 1-2-3-4. Up, 1-2-3-4.

To right. Same count.

To left. Same.

To right. Same.

Backwards march four steps. Start with left foot.

Left, 1-2. Right, 3-4. Left, 1-2. Right, 3-4.

Forward march. Same count.

Backwards again. Same.

Forward. Same.

Repeat from sidewise bend to left to end. Then repeat entire drill from beginning to end.

All four Candles on left-hand side of formation—red, green, yellow and blue—now march forward and take places behind the first four candle holders at left. Next four Candles on left-hand side follow, and so on until a Candle is standing directly behind each holder. The colors are no longer in groups, but assorted, the color arrangement—red, green, yellow and blue—being repeated three times. March music continues until all are in position.

As before, to first half of melody *Wearing of the Green*, the following is sung and acted.

¹ Oh, Candles, Candles, what is this?

² What mean these holders black?

³ They mean that soon we'll be held tight,

⁴ Alas! Alack! Alack!

⁵ But for the sake of Christmas Day

⁶ Let's enter with good cheer,

⁷ And see if we can glimmer bright

⁸ Until the gay New Year.

Movements while singing above.

1-2 Bend over and look into holders.

3-4 Bow heads deeply. Sing fourth line very slowly.

5-6 Sing rapidly again. Throw heads back and gaily step into holders.

7-8 Stand straight and tall.

RAINBOW FROLIC

Seven girls in crepe paper gowns, one each in following colors: red, green, orange, blue, yellow, pink, lavender. Bands of crepe are worn around the head with a big rosette at right side from which slender streamers hang to elbow. Each dress has a pocket at right side. Girls carry scarfs of crepe paper both ends of which have been cut into streamers. Scarfs are five inches wide, and four feet long. Streamers are one foot each. This leaves two feet of solid paper. Scarfs are held at each end of solid part. A small untrimmed tree stands in center of stage. Girls enter to 4-4 time music in color order named.

March as follows. Left foot forward on count of one.

Left foot forward, 1-2-3-4.

Right forward, 1-2-3-4.

At same time that left foot is put forward on the count of one, the scarf is lifted above head.

Down, as right foot is put forward.

Scarf up again as left foot advances.

Continue around stage twice.

The second time cross stage just back of tree and halt in a straight line across stage. All face front.

Arms straight out, 1-2-3-4.

Right hand down and left up, 1-2-3-4.

Left hand down and right up, 1-2-3-4.

Straight out, 1-2-3-4.

Move upward about six inches, 1-2-3-4.

Move arms upward another six, 1-2-3-4.

Again, 1-2-3-4.

For the fourth time, 1-2-3-4.

Scarfs are now high above heads.

Lower to straight-out position by same series of movements and to same count of sixteen.

Swing scarf to left, turning body, but not moving feet,
1-2-3-4.

Back to front, 1-2-3-4.

Swing to right, 1-2-3-4.

To front, 1-2-3-4. Leader faces out. All others face out.

Leader now leads way around stage to same step and movement as when making entrance, scarfs being raised and lowered. In front of tree leader halts. All face audience, standing in a straight line across stage.

Arms are down.

Bow. Down, 1-2-3-4. Up, 1-2-3-4.

Position, 1-2-3-4.

Right about face [*turn to right and at end backs are to audience*], 1-2-3-4.

Bow to tree. Down, 1-2-3-4. Up, 1-2-3-4.

Position, 1-2-3-4.

Right face, 1-2-3-4. This makes a single line one behind the other.

Leader leads way around stage several times, same step and movement as when making entrance, except that this time the girls skip. It requires some practice to skip and manipulate scarfs at same time, but the effects are very spectacular. As skipping continues leader gradually curves inward until a circle is formed around the tree. Halt. All face toward tree. Standing in this circle repeat the drill from the beginning, starting with command "Arms straight out." Omit the marching that comes in between the two parts of the drill. When first part is "Down" go right on with "Bow." Down, 1-2-3-4, etc.

When drill is finished all take out colored Christmas tree ornaments from pockets, each one having ornaments of

same color as dress. These may be cut from colored drawing papers—circles, triangles, stars, etc. Have a string on each by which to hang to tree. All drop scarfs on floor and gather around tree. Decorate it quickly. Return to place in circle and pick up scarf. Leader takes way around stage and off, skipping and waving scarfs as before.

The publishers of this book can supply Dennison's Crepe Paper in all needed colors at 15 cents per fold. Each fold is 10 feet long and 20 inches wide.

THE MIDNIGHT HOUR

For a mixed number, of any size or shape, just so that when members of drill form into couples, the couples will have a uniform size. That is, one pair may be very short and very fat; the next pair exceedingly tall and thin, as long as the tall ones pair off together and the fat ones likewise.

A curtain six feet long and two feet wide is strung across back of stage. On the curtain in large letters are the words ASSORTED CANDIES. The curtain and lettering may be made as decorative as desired in semblance of a box of Christmas candy. Behind the curtain, kneeling down out of sight, are the Assorted Candies. All are dressed in clown suits—red, blue, yellow, green, any color, and striped, spotted or checkered. All wear some sort of cap. The more striking the costumes are, the better, and the plainer the symbolism the more striking it will be. Be sure the curtain is strung firmly, so that it will not fall down when Candies step out of box. All movements are eccentric and jerky.

As piano strikes up march the Candies bob heads up above curtain, down, up, down and up again. This last time the heads remain up. All turn heads to right with quick, mechanical movement. All turn heads to left. Face front. One Candy leans over and hits another on the head. The other retaliates. Other Candies join in. Heads disappear from sight, but audience can see arms swinging and caps flying into the air. Only those who have caps that will not be damaged should throw them. Quickly get them on heads again as battle ends. All bob up. Rise. All cup left ear and incline body sidewise to left listening. Same to right. Straighten up and clap hands. Climb over curtain out into center of stage.

Leader takes way around stage, others dropping in behind. [*Select leader who is original and spirited.*] Leader winds back and forth in many intricate designs, the letters S and W, etc. As the march continues each Candy introduces eccentric variations. For instance, some march stiff-kneed like wooden soldiers. Others move arms up and down with stiff movements of jointed dolls. Others lift knees high like jumping jacks, etc. All keep perfect time to music.

Leader gradually forms circle. Without halting music or step, all face inward. March toward center. Backward march to former position. Again to center. Backward to former position. Face out. All move four sidewise steps to left. Four to right. Deep bow. Again four to left. Four to right. Bow. Face partner. Take hold of hands. Swing in circle. Number One of each couple faces in. Number Two out. Each marches forward two steps in direction he is facing. Back again. Forward. Back. Swing again in circle. Reverse above with Number One facing out and Number Two facing in. Repeat movements.

Repeat drill from point where leader forms circle. When finished all face toward leader who breaks out of circle and leads way around stage in further curious figures.

At this point sleigh bells are shaken loudly off stage, and the Candies rush and jump pell-mell into the box and out of sight.

Dialogues and Plays

ONE TASTE TOO MANY

CHARACTERS

MRS. GRASS

TIM MESSEL

GROCER BOY

HARLEY GRASS

SCENE. Grass dining room.

[There is a table in the center with a white cover on it and a center piece of flowers in a vase. Chairs are arranged around room. A rug or two on the floor. At one side is a small stand on which rests a toy telephone.]

Enter Mrs. Grass wearing kitchen clothes and apron. She speaks in very vehement tones.

MRS. GRASS. Oh, dear me! If it isn't one thing, it's another. No sooner do I get nicely started with my Christmas baking, than I discover that my pantry is half empty. Raisins gone, cocoanut box empty, brown sugar completely disappeared. It is too provoking for words. And I know who is at the foot of it all! It's that little son of mine! Just wait until he comes in. *[Takes up receiver.]* Drexel 3546, please. . . . It's a wonder that boy doesn't turn into a raisin. It's the biggest wonder that his eyes aren't raisins and his nose cocoanut. Hello! This is Mrs. Grass. Is this Thompson's Grocery? . . . I want an order delivered at once, please. Two boxes of seedless raisins, three pounds of brown sugar, and a box of shredded cocoanut. Also, I believe I will have you send up a sack of cornmeal, two pounds of rice and one pound of prunes. . . . Yes, that is all. . . . And please send up right away. Thank you. *[Hangs up receiver.]*

. Well, I suppose I might as well go back to the kitchen. There's plenty to do there. [*Exit.*]

Enter Harley and his friend Tim.

HARLEY. Did you hear her, Tim! [*In awed tones.*] Gosh! she's mad!

TIM. You won't dare go in, now, and ask her for the cookies, will you?

HARLEY [*horrificed*]. Golly, no! But hang it all, how did I know she wanted raisins for her cake, and cocoanut, too? There's other things she could use, couldn't she? There's nuts—and—and—well, there's all sorts of nuts. And then to be blamin' it on me!

TIM. Well, I think we'd better try our luck over at our house. I ate half a pie that Sally left in the icebox, but I don't think they've had time to find it out yet.

HARLEY. Well, gee gosh! I wanted one of them chocolate cookies! They just make my mouth water to think of it. And I'm so blamed hungry I don't think I can wait until I get to your house. I gotta have something right away.

TIM. You just got through eating fifteen of my marshmallows. I don't see how you could be hungry, with all that food in you.

HARLEY [*scornfully*]. What! You call them things food? Marshmallows? They ain't food. They slip down too easily.

TIM. Well, what are they, then? A drink?

HARLEY. They're—they're a sort of—[*Footsteps are heard and there is a knock at the door.*] Come in! I'm not coming to the door. I haven't the time. [*Enter the Grocer Boy carrying a large basket full of packages.*] Well, hello, there, Sammie!

TIM. Hello, Santa Claus! Got anything for a good, little boy?

GROCER BOY. Here's the things your mother ordered, and said she wanted sent up right away. I'll just take them to the kitchen, so she'll know they're here. [*Starts toward kitchen.*]

HARLEY [*jumping up and speaking excitedly*]. Wait! Wait! What's your hurry? [*Goes over to basket.*] Say, I don't think you'd better go out there just now. Maw—she's—she's awful busy, and she doesn't never want to be disturbed when she's busy.

GROCER BOY [*giving Harley a push*]. 'Course, she's busy, and she'll be busier when she gets this basketful. Out of my way, boy. [*At this moment a voice sounds loudly from off-stage: "Get out of my kitchen, you dirty dog!"*]

GROCER BOY [*cringing and rolling eyes*]. My goodness, is that your Maw a-talkin'?

HARLEY. 'Course it is. There, what did I tell you? Now, will you leave the basket with me?

GROCER BOY. I sure will. I'm goin' to get out of here. [*Exit. Harley takes basket over to table and the boys crowd around.*]

HARLEY [*sternly*]. Now, all we're goin' to do is to smell. We aren't goin' to eat one thing. [*Both boys inhale loudly with pleased smiles and noses close to basket.*]

TIM. Say, those raisins smell grand!

HARLEY. But just smell that there cocoanut? I believe it must be a special kind. I never smelled any just like that before. I believe I'll just open the top a little, teeny bit and see how it looks. [*Opens top.*] Hey, Tim! Look at that, will you? Doesn't it make your mouth water? Wonder how it tastes? [*Nibbles at it.*] Some taste! Have a little, Tim! Maw will never notice. [*Tim samples cocoanut.*]

TIM [*smacking lips*]. Say, Harley, how about these raisins? Do you think your Maw would notice if I took just one, or maybe two?

HARLEY. No, she'll never have time to count 'em. Here, let me have some. And here! While we're about let's see if this brown sugar is as good as that other we had. [*Boys sample brown sugar. Then sample raisins again. Then cocoanut, etc.*]

TIM. I want some more raisins.

HARLEY [*picking up box*]. Sure, help your—[*Stops and looks into box with horror.*] My gosh! Where are all the raisins, anyway? Golly, this box is nearly empty! [*Picks up cocoanut box.*] And the cocoanut! And the brown sugar! My land, what'll we do? I'll never dare come home again, not even for Christmas dinner!

TIM. I'll tell you! I gotta an idea. Let's fill up the brown sugar sack with cornmeal. They're just about the same color, and when they're mixed together your mother will never notice.

HARLEY. Gee, that's a good idea, Tim! And here's some rice. Let's mix it in with the cocoanut. [*They busily mix contents of boxes and sacks.*] Put some prunes in that raisin box, Tim. And kind of mess 'em around so they'll look like raisins.

TIM. This is working great.

HARLEY. There! It's all fixed, and now let's get out of here. I feel sort of nervous. [*Exit.*]

Enter Mrs. Grass smiling pleasantly.

MRS. GRASS. Well, how lovely! The groceries here already. I'll take them right out to the kitchen. I'm so anxious to get my cake done. It's turning out so well. I believe it's going to be one of the best cakes I ever made. [*Exit with basket.*]

THE NEW SYSTEM

FOR TINY GIRLS

CHARACTERS

PRISCILLA

MILDRED

CLARICE

HAZEL

SCENE. They are seated around a small table. Priscilla is entertaining the sewing club.

CLARICE. I do declare! I'm all excited about the letter I wrote to Santa Claus.

MILDRED. Why, what is the matter, Clarice?

CLARICE. Well, you see, I forgot to tell Santa that I want my doll to have dark hair and dark eyes. I'm just worried to death for fear I'll get a light-haired one.

HAZEL. Oh, you should have mentioned it. You can't blame Santa if he makes a mistake. He has so many orders.

PRISCILLA. Well, it isn't too late to let him know, even yet, is it? You could send the letter by Special Delivery. My mamma sends letters that way sometimes when she wants them to get there in a hurry.

MILDRED. You might try it, Clarice, and then you could stop worrying.

CLARICE. I believe I will. [*Puts aside sewing.*] I'll go out and do it right now.

PRISCILLA [*also puts aside sewing*]. But wait a minute. If you're going to send in a new order, why don't you get it right out of Santa's catalogue?

ALL. Santa's catalogue! We didn't know he had one.

PRISCILLA. 'Deed he has! And it's just full of the most loveliest pictures! There's dolls and tables and dishes

and carriages and everything—right there for you to see and to pick out 'zackly what you want.

MILDRED. Oh, where is it? I want to see it right away.

PRISCILLA. Just you wait. I'll get it in a minute. And I'll show you what I ordered, too. [*Exit.*]

CLARICE. I'm so glad I heard about this before I wrote another letter to Santa. Probably I'll see just the doll I want. Oh, here she comes!

Enter Priscilla carrying a large mail-order catalogue of any well-known firm. Hold it up so audience can see the name of the mail-order company on the cover.

PRISCILLA. There! That's Santa's catalogue. At least, I think it is. If it isn't it ought to be. [*Throws catalogue onto table. Others crowd around.*] Now, see here. [*Opens catalogue.*] Here's the doll I ordered from Santa, and here's the bed she's to sleep in, and here's the dishes she's to eat off of, and here's her carriage, and here's her best dress, and here's her rocking chair, and—

OTHERS. Oh, Priscilla, how grand! [*Then all talking at the same time.*] I want this—I want this—I want this, etc.

PRISCILLA. I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll all write our orders over. I've thought of lots of more things I want, and when you've looked at this catalogue, you'll think of lots more, too.

CLARICE. Oh, yes, and let's hurry and get started. I'm so anxious to get my letter off.

PRISCILLA. Come on. [*Picks up catalogue.*] We'll go into mother's room, where we'll find pencils and paper.

ALL [*as exit is made, talking simultaneously*]. I want a doll's chair—I'm going to order a tea set—I saw just the doll bed I want, etc. [*Exit.*]

WATCHFUL PRESENTS

CHARACTERS

MRS. GRAHAM

JANE

MR. GRAHAM

LEROY

WILLARD, Leroy's friend

SCENE. Leroy's bedroom.

[There is a bed made of dry goods boxes and covered with an Indian blanket. Pillow at head. At one side is another box with a dresser scarf on it. Mirror on wall above. Comb, brush, etc., on this improvised dresser. In the center of the room is a table with a drawer in it. One or two chairs. Pictures or pennants on wall.]

Enter Mrs. Graham.

MRS. GRAHAM. Leroy is out, I see. I was afraid I would find him here. Well, now where shall I hide this watch I bought him for a Christmas present? He has been pestering me for two years to get him a watch, and at last I had enough money saved to get him one. I wonder—*[Looks around room and then at table.]* Here in this drawer will be a good place. He'll pull it open to look for something and there it will be right before his eyes. I wish I could see his pleased look. *[Puts watch into drawer and closes it.]* Who's that coming? Oh, I hope it isn't Leroy? Probably I can hurry up the hall before he sees me. *[Exit hastily.]*

Enter Mr. Graham looking cautiously around. He comes tip-toeing in.

MR. GRAHAM. Coast clear, is it? It's a wonder. That blamed kid has been monkeying in his room all morning. Thought I never would find a chance to leave his Christmas present in his room. *[Takes it from pocket.]* There! As good a watch as any ten-year-old youngster ever had. He's been crowing for a watch for the last five years

and it's been getting on my nerves so I thought I'd hush him up. Now, where can I put it so that he'll find it when he comes to his room. I believe—[*Goes over to dresser.*—that under this hairbrush would be a good place. He may decide to brush his hair—if he does, it will be the first time today—and when he picks up the brush, won't he be surprised! I'd like to be around about that time. [*Hides watch under brush.*] But I must get out of here. No telling when he'll be back. [*Exit.*]

JANE [*entering*]. Well, that brother of mine is out, is he? Oh, what a burden he is to me! He teases me and teases me and teases me! I really shouldn't have bought him this nice watch for a Christmas present, but I did it so he would keep quiet. He's been wailing about not having a watch for all of ten years, and I'm tired of hearing about it. This ought to keep him quiet. I'll—I'll—I'll put it under his pillow and he will hear it ticking in his dreams. What a good idea! [*Tucks it under.*] Sweet dreams, Leroy! [*Exit.*]

Enter Leroy and Willard.

LEROY. Come in, Willard, and make yourself at home. Have a chair. [*Willard takes a chair.*] Say, what do you think you're goin' to get for Christmas? [*He strolls over to dresser.*]

WILLARD. I don't know. I always like to have Santa surprise me. [*Both boys laugh uproariously at this.*]

LEROY. Oh, you and your Santa! [*He paws through a pile of odds and ends at one corner of the dresser. Stops and rubs both ears vigorously.*] Well, if you've been a good, little boy Santa won't pass you by. My Sunday School teacher said so. [*Both laugh again. Leroy rubs his ears again.*]

WILLARD. What's the matter? Got a bite?

LEROY. No, but it's a funny thing. Seems to me I hear a watch ticking all the time. [*Rubs ears again.*]

WILLARD. Aw, you just have watch on the brain, that's all. You been thinking about it so long that you're not feeling well. [*He goes over and throws himself on the bed with his head on the pillow.*]

LEROY. Well, I s'pose I have been talking about a watch more or less. I'm old enough to have one, but it isn't any use to talk to this family.

WILLARD. Oh, now, don't take it so hard. You never can— [*He half rises, a puzzled look on his face. Rubs both ears vigorously. Looks at pillow. Listens. Rubs ears again.*]

LEROY. Well, are you hearing things, too? It must be catching. Better not tell the doctor or he'll quarantine us.

WILLARD [*in scared tones*]. No, but, honest, I can hear a watch ticking just as plain as day. I—I think its kind of funny, don't you?

LEROY [*goes over to bed and listens*]. Blame such ears! What's the matter with 'em? [*A frightened look dawns on his face. He rubs his ears as hard as he can.*]

WILLARD. Let's listen over here again. [*Both go to dresser and listen. Then both hastily retreat to table with scared faces.*] Gee, I—I don't like the looks of this thing. There's something sort of spooky about it. [*As they stand looking at the dresser both start violently and exchange looks.*]

LEROY [*in whisper*]. Say, do you hear another watch, right close by us?

WILLARD. I sure do. But it won't be close by long. I'm going. [*Starts for door.*]

LEROY [*hoarsely*]. Say, lis'n, I'm not going to have anyone say I was a coward. I'm not going to let this thing scare me. Here's where I find out how many spooks there

are. [*With these words, he rushes to the bed and snatches off the pillow. Stops short.*]

WILLARD. What is it? What did you find?

LEROY. Find! [*In joyful tones.*] A watch! A swell watch! Come and look, Will. Oh, isn't this a peach? "From Jane." [*Reads.*]

WILLARD. It's a dandy all right. But what about these other ticks? [*Opens table drawer.*] My gosh! Watches all over the place! [*Leroy picks it up.*]

LEROY. Say, can you beat this? It never rains but that it pours. Say, let's look over here at the dresser. [*Picks up brush.*] Ouch! Help! Another one! Say, isn't this great? I feel as if I was dreaming. Honest, I do!

WILLARD. Well, now, you have a watch for nearly every day in the week.

LEROY. I'll say I have. [*Fondles watches eagerly.*] I wasn't really and truly scared. Were you, Willard?

WILLARD [*nonchalantly*]. Naw, I should say not. I was just a-foolin'.

BOTH. It would take more than the ticking of a watch to scare me.

CURTAIN

TEA FOR THREE

CHARACTERS

MRS. JAMES

MRS. SHEPHERD

SCENE. The sitting room of Mrs. James' home.

[*The two ladies are having tea at a very small table. In between them, on a chair and facing the audience, sits Constance, Mrs. James' doll.*]

MRS. SHEPHERD. Constance is looking well.

MRS. JAMES. Oh, yes, she is growing so.

MRS. SHEPHERD. Children do grow so fast. [*A doorbell sounds.*]

MRS. JAMES. Oh, there is the doorbell! Excuse me, please.
[*Exit.*]

MRS. SHEPHERD [*taking a tape measure from her pocket*].
I suppose it's a mean trick, but I had Jimmy ring that bell on purpose so that I could find out how long to make that dress for Constance for a Christmas present.
[*Measures Constance as she sits in chair.*] Fourteen inches! And now—Oh, here she comes!

MRS. JAMES [*entering*]. There was no one there. Someone must have been at the wrong door and left before I got there.

MRS. SHEPHERD. Oh, yes, it is so easy to get to the wrong door.

MRS. JAMES. I wonder if—[*The bell sounds again.*] Well, there's that bell again. Excuse me, Mrs. Shepherd.
[*Exit.*]

MRS. SHEPHERD. I hope Jimmy doesn't get caught. He might give the whole thing away. [*Takes out tape.*] Now how long are the sleeves? [*Hastily measures.*] There, now only the waist measure is left. [*Takes seat as Mrs. James re-enters.*]

MRS. JAMES. Well, such a bother. No one there again. I can't understand it. I really think it must be some bad boy. If I could catch him I'd—[*The bell sounds again.*] For mercy sakes! There it is again! Well, this will be the last time I'll answer it. The very last. [*Exit.*]

MRS. SHEPHERD. It will be the last chance you get to answer it. It isn't going to ring any more. [*Rises and measures*

doll's waist.] Now, there, I have all the measurements. I can make the dress just right. [*Re-enter Mrs. James.*]

MRS. JAMES. The strangest thing! No one there this time, either.

MRS. SHEPHERD [*rising*]. Well, I must be going. I've had a fine time. Come and call on me sometime, won't you? Goodbye.

MRS. JAMES. Good day. Please come again. I always enjoy your visits so much. [*Exit Mrs. Shepherd.*]

EAGER EARS

CHARACTERS

JOHN

MRS. MASON

AUNT TILLIE

SCENE. Mason sitting room.

[*The table in the center of the room has a cover that hangs nearly to floor. Chairs are drawn up close to back side of table.*]

Enter John.

JOHN. I hear Aunt Tillie out in the kitchen. She and Maw were talking in whispers. I know what it was about. My Christmas present. Aunt Tilly always gives me something great. Say, I hope she gives me a Brewster engine. They're the best you can find. They run without being wound up or anything. They do their own winding inside of themselves, they say. Gosh! Here they come. Where can I hide and hear it all? [*Dives under table.*]

MRS. MASON [*as she and Aunt Tillie enter*]. Of course, he would like an engine, but isn't there a cheaper one than the Brewster engine? Just a cheap one would please him as well.

AUNT TILLIE. Oh, I know how these boys are. [*They seat themselves at table.*] They want all the newest attachments, and I hear the Brewster is the best. [*John pushes aside the cover and sticks his head out. He grins broadly and claps hand silently, with nods of approval.*]

MRS. MASON. Now, I saw an engine in Smith's store. It was such a pretty one, all red and yellow, and it didn't cost very much, either. I remember John picked it up when we were in there.

AUNT TILLIE. Do you really think he would like it the best?

MRS. MASON. Yes, I do. [*At this John makes a sour face and shakes his head vigorously.*] John can have the best sort of fun with any toy.

AUNT TILLIE. Of course, I want to get just what will please him.

MRS. MASON. The red and yellow engine will tickle him to death.

JOHN [*in sudden loud voice*]. It will not. I want a Brewster 'cause you never have to wind them up.

BOTH LADIES. Mercy on us! Who is that?

MRS. MASON [*lifting cover*]. Oh, so it's you, is it? What do you mean by listening that way? [*Drags him out.*]

JOHN [*crying*]. I don't want no old red and yellow engine.

MRS. MASON. You may go to your room at once. [*Exit John.*]

AUNT TILLIE [*laughing*]. The little rascal! But I'm sort of glad, in a way. Now I know just what to get him for a Christmas present, that will please him.

MRS. MASON. He needs a switch. It wouldn't please him, but it would more than please me.

WHO'S SICK

CHARACTERS

JESSIE

VIRGINIA

BERNARD

FRANK

MRS. LINDBERG

SCENE. The Lindberg kitchen.

[*Mrs. Lindberg has just finished making popcorn balls and is cleaning up. The plate of popcorn rests in the center of the table.*]

MRS. LINDBERG [*wiping hands*]. There, that sticky work is done. I wouldn't have made them at all, only the children like them so well. Won't their eyes pop open when they see that heaping plate? I wonder where they are. Oh, well, I won't bother to call them in to eat. They'll be drifting along presently, and no need to say that they'll be very quickly helping themselves. I'm willing to wager a nickel that there won't be a ball left when I return. And now I have some mending to do, so I'll hurry along. [*Exit.*]

JESSIE [*entering with skates on arm, hat and coat on*]. Oh, my! What do my eyes behold? Aren't they wonderful? So this is what mother has been doing all this time. Oh, I wish I could have just one. [*Goes over and sniffs.*] I wonder if she would miss just one. But I forgot! It's almost Christmas! What a narrow escape! A good thing I remembered. The day before Christmas is no time to be stealing. I'll leave before they get too tempting. [*Exit.*]

BERNARD [*entering in company with Frank*]. Look! Look! The biggest one is mine. Here, give me that one! [*Both grab at popcorn balls.*]

FRANK. They're still hot. Mother must have just finished making them. Say, should we take two, or only three?

BERNARD [*pausing as popcorn ball is on way to his mouth*].
Good night, I forgot! [*Puts ball back onto plate hastily.*]

FRANK. Forgot what?

BERNARD. It's almost Christmas Day!

FRANK [*in startled voice, also putting ball down*]. My stars! You're right!

BERNARD. Whew! Think if we had helped ourselves.

FRANK. One of the narrowest escapes I ever had.

BERNARD. Come on. I can't stand to look at them any longer; that is, look and not eat. [*Exit both.*]

VIRGINIA [*entering*]. Oh, I'm so hungry! I wonder if there's anything in the pantry. I'd just love—[*Stops short.*] Popcorn balls! Gorgeous, golden popcorn balls! Oh, which one shall I take? This big one or—no, I see a little one that has much more taffy on it. Or, shall I take both? [*Holds up ball.*] It looks like the balls you see on the Christmas tree. [*Stops short. Puts ball down quickly.*] My goodness, a good thing I happened to think of that! I completely forgot. It's almost Christmas! What if I had actually eaten one! No, indeed. I'll wait until Christmas is over before I run such risks. [*Exit.*]

MRS. LINDBERG [*entering*]. Well, of course, there isn't a ball left! No one needs to tell me that—[*Stops and stares.*] What's this? The plate full! Not a popcorn ball gone! I can't understand it. [*Goes over to plate.*] This has never happened before. What can the matter be? I know very well the children were here for I heard every one come in. They must be sick! Nothing else can explain it. That's it. There are so many contagious diseases around at this time. Oh, dear me, I'm worried to death. I'm going to call them in right this minute, and give every one of them a good dose of Mother Graham's Sure-cure Medicine. I know those children. They're either eating, or they're very, very sick. [*Exit hastily.*]

GUARANTEED TO PLEASE

CHARACTERS

MRS. PANSY, the store keeper

AUNT CARRY, a customer

MAYBELLE, a small child in cap and coat

SCENE. Mrs. Pansy's store.

[The counter is made of boxes. At one end of the counter there is a curtain behind which is a hiding place. Mrs. Pansy is standing at the counter straightening her toys.]

MRS. PANSY. The way the children paw over these toys is dreadful. They have them so dirty I can't sell them. I must get a cloth and clean some of them off. *[Exit.]*

Maybelle enters. She goes over to the counter.

MAYBELLE. Oh, the pretty horse! *[Takes horse from counter.]* Oh, I want that horse so much! If I had him I would name him Ruth Patsy. That's the name of my best friend, and I think it is the prettiest name in the world. I don't like this other horse. It isn't a pretty color.

VOICE *[sounding loudly from off-stage as Maybelle fondles horse]*. Oh, how do you do, Aunt Carry? Come right in. I'm busy, but not too busy to talk.

MAYBELLE. My Aunt Carry! Now, what's she coming here for? *[Dives behind curtain.]*

Enter Mrs. Pansy and Aunt Carry.

AUNT CARRY. 'Deed and I'm all out of breath. Ain't this the worst weather you ever did see? I declare I'm almost chokin'.

MRS. PANSY. Have a chair, Aunt Carry, have a chair. *[Rushes forward with chair.]*

AUNT CARRY [*waving her aside*]. No, thanks. I'm feelin' better now. I came to look at a present for Maybelle. Now what do you suppose she would like?

MRS. PANSY. A doll? She's a girl, you know.

AUNT CARRY. She's got dolls to burn. [*Examines toys.*]

MRS. PANSY [*brightly*]. How about a nice animal? A kitty, for instance.

AUNT CARRY. I was thinkin' about an animal myself. These here horses are purty. 'Specially this here one. [*She picks up the one Maybelle did not like.*]

MRS. PANSY. There are some other animals in the show window. Let us look at them.

AUNT CARRY. Well, we can look, but I've just about decided to take this horse. It tickles my eye to look at it. [*Exit both.*]

MAYBELLE [*coming out*]. Oh, I'm afraid I won't get my pretty horse. I wouldn't call this nasty thing Ruth Patsy. Oh, I know what I'll do. [*She picks up the ugly horse and dives back into hiding place.*]

Enter Mrs. Pansy and Aunt Carry.

AUNT CARRY. Yes, I've decided on a horse. And the horse I want is—[*Looks around.*] Where is it?

MRS. PANSY [*looking all around*]. Why, for goodness sakes! Where has it gone?

AUNT CARRY. Couldn't have walked off by itself, could it?

MRS. PANSY. It was here just a second ago. [*Sorting out toys.*]

AUNT CARRY. Drat such luck! Well, I can't wait any longer. I'll have to take this other horse. Wrap it up, will you, Mrs. Pansy?

MRS. PANSY [*handing wrapped horse to Aunt Carry*]. I'm very sorry about that horse. I simply can't understand

it. I'll open the door for you. You have your hands full.
[*Exit.*]

MAYBELLE [*comes out and puts horse back on counter*].
Well, I'll get one Christmas present that I like, anyway.
[*Runs off stage.*]

A CHANGEABLE DRESS

CHARACTERS

ISABELLE	BILLY
BETSY	JACK
GRANDMOTHER HARRIS	PATSY DINAH, colored cook
	MRS. HARRIS

SCENE. Harris sitting room.

[*Usual furnishings. Isabelle is dusting the furniture. A knock is heard at the door.*]

ISABELLE. Come in.

Enter Betsy.

BETSY. Hello, Isabelle. I see your mother has you busy.
Well, go right on. You never have to entertain me, you know. I feel right at home around here.

ISABELLE. Take this rocking chair by the table, Betsy. And read a book until I am through dusting the other rooms. Yes, you are right. Mother has me busy. She knows its getting near Christmas and I don't dare refuse to do all she tells me.

BETSY [*takes up a book*]. Mother has the right idea. What's the name of that good story your mother was talking about the other day, Isabelle? I believe I'll read it while I wait.

ISABELLE. I can't remember. It was something about a house. "The Brown House." I think that was the name. Well, make yourself at home, Betsy. [*Exit.*]

BETSY. I came over this morning to find out about Isabelle's new dress that she is planning. I want to get her a belt for a Christmas present, but I don't know the color of the dress. At the same time, I don't want a single member of the family to know, because there isn't one of them that can keep a secret.

BILLY and JACK [*entering*]. Hello, Betsy. The top of the morning to you.

BETSY. Hello, boys. How are the Harris twins?

BILLY and JACK [*putting arms around each other's neck*]. Fine! We look less and less alike every day.

BETSY [*laughing*]. Why, that isn't the way for twins to look. It should be that even your own family couldn't tell you apart. By the way, Isabelle is going to have a new dress, isn't she?

BOYS [*looking puzzled*]. Is she?

BETSY. Why, of course. Don't you know about it?

BILLY. Oh, sure. Seems to me I did hear her mention a new dress.

JACK. New dresses! That's all she talks about.

BETSY. But the color—I was wondering if she did get blue, after all.

BILLY. Blue? Let me see. I believe it was blue, wasn't it, Jack?

JACK. Far as I can remember she said she wanted green.

BETSY. Green? Are you sure?

BILLY. Aw, no, it had green trimmings. The dress wasn't going to be green.

JACK. Well, I know I heard her say something about green. Say, and wasn't there some red on it?

BETSY. Red! For goodness sake, where was the red?

JACK. Buttons or something.

BETSY. Oh, I don't believe you know a thing about it.
How's the skating, boys?

BOYS. Fine. We're getting ready to go out now. [*Exit.*]

BETSY. Well, not much information there. Oh, here comes
Grandmother Harris. I'll surely find out from her.

GRANDMOTHER HARRIS [*entering*]. Well, well, here's our
little Betsy. How are you, Betsy?

BETSY [*rising quickly*]. Good morning, Grandmother Har-
ris. Take my chair. This is the best one in the room.

GRANDMOTHER HARRIS [*seating self*]. And how you are
getting along with your Christmas shopping?

BETSY [*sitting close by*]. Oh, pretty well. There's always
a few things that one forgets and leaves until the last
moment.

GRANDMOTHER HARRIS. Have you seen Isabelle? She's
around her somewheres.

BETSY. Oh, yes, I've seen her. By the way, Grandmother,
is Isabelle going to get her new dress or has she already
gotten it?

GRANDMOTHER HARRIS. She hasn't gotten it yet. She don't
seem to be able to make up her mind how she wants it
made, and so, naturally, she doesn't want to buy it before
she knows how much material she needs.

BETSY. But I suppose she knows what color she wants.

GRANDMOTHER HARRIS. Oh, yes, yes, she decided that long
ago.

BETSY. I remember she didn't think green would go with
her hat and blue—

GRANDMOTHER HARRIS [*laughing*]. —and blue wouldn't
match her eyes and brown didn't look well with her coat

and black was too old! Oh, such a time as she did have trying to decide!

BETSY. And so she decided at last, did she?

GRANDMOTHER HARRIS. Yes, thank goodness, and I think she took the best color after all. I had been telling her to take that one all along. But young folks have to make up their own minds. Well, well, I completely forgot about that package I want to send off this morning. It isn't wrapped or anything. Excuse me, Betsy, for a while, will you?

BETSY [*rising until Grandmother Harris has left the room*]. I'm getting tired of this! Of all the beating around the bush! Doesn't anyone know anything around here?

PATSY DINAH [*entering with plate of cookies*]. Good mornin', Missy Betsy. You-all seems to be left alone. Ahm bringin' you'uns some nice fresh cookies, so's you-all won't get lonesome.

BETSY. Thank you, Patsy Dinah. Oh, what lovely cookies! You can leave the whole plate, if you want to, Patsy.

PATSY DINAH. Ahm aimin' to leave all of 'em. Young misses is shuah powerfu' big eaters. [*Puts plate on table.*]

BETSY [*nibbling cookie*]. I hear Isabelle is getting a new dress, Patsy Dinah.

PATSY DINAH. Yes'um. She-all am.

BETSY. Do you know what color she is going to—[*A voice off-stage is lifted: "Patsy Dinah! Patsy Dinah! Where are you?"*]

PATSY DINAH [*raising voice*]. Ahm heah. What all is yo' wantin'? [*To Betsy.*] That's the Missus. She-all is fixin' Chris'mus dinnah, so Ise better be gittin' along. Good day, Missy Betsy.

BETSY [*in tones of exasperation*]. Well, I might as well go home. I never heard of so many dense people. I wish,

Mrs. Harris would come. I think I could worm it out of her. Oh, how do you do, Mrs. Harris?

MRS. HARRIS [*entering*]. Have they left you all alone? Such people! But I see you are busy reading. That's right. Just make yourself at home. [*Mrs. Harris goes over to the table and begins rearranging the books and magazines and other articles.*]

BETSY. Mrs. Harris, how is Isabelle getting along with her new dress?

MRS. HARRIS. Her new dress? Oh, you mean the one she was thinking of getting? She's changed her mind about that.

BETSY. You mean—

MRS. HARRIS. She's decided not to get a new dress at all. She said she would rather have a fur neckpiece.

BETSY. I—I see. [*Rises.*] It's time for me to go, Mrs. Harris. I just remembered that I had some Christmas shopping that I must attend to. [*Enter Isabelle.*] Sorry I have to go, Isabelle. I'll try to run in this afternoon.

ISABELLE. Oh, must you go? I just finished dusting.

MRS. HARRIS. No use in hurrying off, Betsy.

BETSY. Thank you very much, but I must go. I have to decide on a very important Christmas present for a dear friend of mine, and I haven't the least idea what I'll get.

MRS. HARRIS. Oh, that is important, so we will let you go.

BETSY. Goodbye!

MRS. HARRIS and ISABELLE. Goodbye! Good luck in selecting your present!

BETSY. Thank you. I wish the same. [*Exit.*]

CURTAIN

GRANDMOTHER WILL DECIDE

CHARACTERS

GRANDMOTHER PARSONS

ARTHUR

KATHERINE

ROBERT

SCENE. Grandmother Parsons' kitchen.

[She is making cookies at a table upon which are her cooking utensils. At one end of the table, spread out on a clean towel, is a batch of baked cookies.]

GRANDMOTHER. The children will be here. They always find out when I'm making cookies, and they swarm around like flies. But I suppose it's natural. Cookies and children take to each other as easily as flies take to honey. There! I hear them at the door, and all talking at once, as usual. The noisiest bunch I ever saw, and the dearest as well.

The children come flocking in.

ALL. Cookies! Hurray!

KATHERINE. Are we just to look, Grandmother, or may we also eat?

GRANDMOTHER. Both, my dear. Whichever suits you best.

ARTHUR. That won't take long for me to decide.

ROBERT. I'm always decided on that question.

KATHERINE. Now, don't make pigs of yourself, boys.

BOYS. Same to you, Katie.

GRANDMOTHER. I made this first batch just for you young folks. I wasn't sure if I had enough baking powder in the batter, so I baked these to see. I knew that even if they never raised a tenth of an inch there would be someone who would eat them, and I see I was right. *[A bell sounds off-stage.]*

ARTHUR. There's the telephone. Should I answer, Grandmother?

KATHERINE. Let me do it, Grandmother.

ARTHUR. I spoke first.

KATHERINE. Yes, but you always get things mixed up when you answer. [*Both start running out of the room.*]

GRANDMOTHER [*wiping hands on apron*]. Here, here, children. I'll answer the telephone. I know who it is. It's Mrs. Simpkins. She said she would call about this time. [*Exit.*]

ROBERT. Well, if we're going to find out what Grandmother needs, so that we can give it to her for a Christmas present, we'd better begin.

ARTHUR. You start the ball rolling when she comes back.

ROBERT. No, let Katherine do it. Grandmother will suspect if we say anything.

KATHERINE. Yes, for goodness sake let me do the talking. You boys will give the whole thing away.

ARTHUR. Well, that suits me. I'm busy, anyway. [*Takes another cookie.*]

Grandmother comes into kitchen.

GRANDMOTHER. My, my, where's all my cookies? First thing I know I'll have to be turning out another pan for you. I only have the two pans for my third one got all rusted in some way.

KATHERINE. Oh!—and you really should have three pans, shouldn't you, Grandmother? [*Children nod meaningly at each other.*]

GRANDMOTHER. Yes, indeed, and a new egg-beater, besides. This one doesn't beat worth a cent.

ROBERT. That's the most important thing about a cake, I guess—the egg-beater. Isn't it, Grandmother?

ARTHUR. The most important thing about the cake is the cake, in my opinion.

GRANDMOTHER. And that reminds me, that your Aunt Mary took my hand-painted cake plate with her when she was packing up. She got things all mixed up. I don't know what I'll do without that cake plate. It was the only nice one I had.

KATHERINE. You must get a new one, Grandmother.

GRANDMOTHER. A new one? Yes, and a new tea set, and a new coffee pot for this old one is getting ready to leak, and a new tablecloth for I haven't one in the house that hasn't been mended. [*Children exchange dismayed looks.*]

ROBERT. Is that all you need, Grandmother?

GRANDMOTHER. Land sakes, no! I need new stockings, and a pair of new bedroom slippers, and a new waist, and a new rug for the front room, and new mittens, and new rubbers, and a box of writing paper, and a new looking glass, and a bottle of perfume, and—

CHILDREN. Help! Help! That's enough, Grandmother.

ARTHUR. You only want the whole world, don't you?

KATHERINE. Come on, boys. I want to see you a minute.

ROBERT. Excuse us, Grandmother, we have important business.

ARTHUR. We'll be back in time for that new pan of cookies. [*Exit.*]

GRANDMOTHER [*laughing*]. Weren't they the surprised young ones when I got going with all the things I needed? You see, I heard what they said while I was out of the room, and I thought I'd give them a good long list of the things I needed so that if they couldn't find one that suited them, they could try for another.

CURTAIN

A FAIR EXCHANGE

CHARACTERS

JIMMY GEM	MRS. GEM
GRANDFATHER GEM	MR. GEM
DOROTHY GEM	

SCENE. Gem sitting room.

[There is the usual furnishing with a fireplace at one side. All are present.]

DOROTHY. I'm not going to hang up my stocking this year. I asked Santa for a doll carriage, and there isn't any stocking big enough for that.

JIMMY. Aw, you gotta hang up your stockin' or Santa won't leave you nuthin'. Isn't that true, Grandfather?

GRANDFATHER. Well, that's what I always thought. I know I'm going to hang up mine tonight.

DOROTHY and JIMMY *[laughing loudly]*. Are you really, Grandfather?

MRS. GEM. Well, I don't see why not. Grandfather is the youngest person in the house.

MR. GEM. If I thought I'd get anything I'd certainly hang mine up. But I never seem to have any luck any more. I always get passed up for someone else. Santa seems to have pets around this place.

JIMMY. I'm going to hang up the biggest stocking of all.

DOROTHY. Oh, but Jimmy, you're the smallest person in the house. You should hang up the smallest.

JIMMY. That's why I'm hanging up the biggest. Santa likes small boys and always leaves them the most.

MRS. GEM. He's right about that. Small boys always get more than they know what to do with on Christmas Day.

MR. GEM. Well, if Santa got that letter Jimmy wrote, he'll need all the stockings in the place.

JIMMY. Sure he got it. I sent it to Mr. Santa Claus, North Pole. That's where he lives.

DOROTHY. But could he read it? That's what's bothering me. Of course, I know he could read mine. Your letter looked so funny. It was just like chicken scratchings.

JIMMY. Aw, it was not! My letter looked better'n yours did. I could read my letter, so I guess Santa Claus could.

GRANDFATHER. Oh, yes, I don't think you need be worrying about that. I've heard that Santa could read standing on his head.

DOROTHY and JIMMY [*laughing merrily*]. Grandfather, he can not!

GRANDFATHER. Well, that's what I heard. Believe it or not.

MRS. GEM. Well, this is enough of this stocking business for me. It is time to get dinner. I know I am just as hungry as can be. [*Exit.*]

MR. GEM. I must see about getting the radio fixed. It doesn't seem to work just right. Come along, Grandfather. You know more about radios than I do. [*Exit both.*]

JIMMY [*calling after them*]. Don't forget about your stocking, Grandfather!

DOROTHY. Grandfather was only fooling.

JIMMY. Aw, he was not. Don't you s'pose he wants some presents, too? But now I'm going out to look for the biggest stocking I can find. And you'd better get busy and look, too. [*Exit.*]

DOROTHY. It won't be a bit of use for me to hang up a stocking, and Santa would only burst out laughing when he saw it, after I told him I wanted a doll carriage big

enough to wheel on the street and to hold all my dolla. But—yet—[*Thinks.*]—oh, I know what I'll do. I'll write a note and pin it up on the fireplace. I'll put it in plain sight so that he'll be sure and see it. And in the note I'll 'splain all about the matter to him. [*Exit.*]

Enter Jimmy carrying stocking.

JIMMY. How's that for a stocking? Big enough, I guess. Santa will be doing the right thing if he ever gets it filled to the top. [*Hangs stocking on fireplace.*] Now, I wonder if Santa will know that this is my stocking. If he thinks of all the things I asked for, he'll see that only the biggest one could be mine. I'll leave it to Santa.

DOROTHY [*entering*]. Oh, what a big stocking! Why, Santa will be scared when he sees it. He'll be scared he can't fill it. [*Pins up note.*] There, that will tell Santa why I didn't hang my stocking.

JIMMY. Aw, Santa never runs out of toys. He always has millions.

DOROTHY. Let's go to the kitchen and watch mother get dinner.

JIMMY. Allright, and maybe we'll get some cake. [*Exit.*]

Enter Grandfather Gem.

GRANDFATHER [*holding up huge stocking*]. I promised Jimmy I would hang my stocking, so here it is. This great big one was the only one I could find. It's too bad it's bigger than Jimmy's. But he'll never notice, he'll be so busy looking at his toys. [*Hangs stocking.*] Heh! hey! [*Laughs.*] They say there's no fool like an old one, and I guess they're right. What would Grandmother Gem say if she could see me hanging up my stocking for Santy to fill? Hey, hey, hey! [*Exit.*]

[*The stage is now darkened. Two forms appear upon it. They cross the stage and fill the two stockings. One of them speaks: "The biggest stocking is Jimmy's, isn't it?"*]

and the other one replies, "Oh, certainly. Trust him to find the biggest one." The other shadow then says, "We'll put Dorothy's gifts in her room, by the side of her bed." The second shadow answers, "Come on. It took us so long to trim the tree that it will soon be daylight." Exit. The stage grows lighter gradually and, as it is fully lighted, Jimmy appears at one side of the stage and Grandfather at the other. Both shout simultaneously "Merry Christmas!" Jimmy wears pajamas. Grandfather is in a long bathrobe.]

JIMMY. I couldn't wait any longer, Grandfather. Golly, look at those stockings bulging out with presents. Come on, let's see what we got. [Both take down stockings. Jimmy sits on floor, Grandfather stands nearby.] What's this funny long thing sticking out of my stocking? [Pulls out a cane.] A cane! I don't need any cane.

GRANDFATHER. What's this shiny thing sticking out of mine? [Pulls out a horn.]

JIMMY. Why, Grandfather! I ordered the horn! Say, this is a funny business. What's this old thing, anyway? [Pulls out a pipe.]

GRANDFATHER [laughing loudly]. Well, good for Santa. He knows you're going to take after your old Grandad and be a good-natured smoker. But what does he think I am? A baby still wearing rompers? [Pulls out bright-colored rubber ball.]

JIMMY. Of all the mean old presents, these are the worst! Grandfather, what are these things? [Holds up earmuffs.]

GRANDFATHER. Those are earmuffs to keep your ears warm.

JIMMY [puts them on]. I won't wear them. All the boys would laugh. [Dives into stocking.] Look, Grandfather! [Pulls out a necktie, a pair of enormous bedroom slippers and a pair of spectacles.]

GRANDFATHER. And look here! Wasn't Santa good to me? [Pulls out an air-gun, an engine, a woolly dog and a candy cane.]

JIMMY [*throwing his things on floor and bursting out into loud crying*]. Aw-w! S-Santa d-d-didn't bring me t-t-the right things a-a-at all!

GRANDFATHER. Well, I've a notion to cry, too. What does he expect me to do with a woolly dog? Of course, I can have a lot of fun with the ball, but the dog—I call that going too far.

JIMMY. A-a-and I wrote the l-l-letter just as p-p-plain as c-c-ould be!

GRANDFATHER. Dear, dear, this is certainly a frightful mix-up. I never expected Santa to make such a mistake as this. I wonder—I believe I have an idea. Do you know what I think?

JIMMY. I-I-I d-d-don't know what you think, but I-I-I think t-t-that Santa is j-j-just an old fake.

GRANDFATHER [*mysteriously*]. Well, I wouldn't want him to hear, but I think he made a mistake when he was filling our stockings. He thought mine was yours and yours was mine. Don't you think so?

JIMMY [*dries eyes on sleeve and sits up*]. Oh, do you really think so, Grandfather?

GRANDFATHER. I'm almost certain of it. Now, look here. You wanted a gun and a ball and an engine and a dog and a candy cane. There they are—everyone of them.

JIMMY [*in loud delighted voice*]. And you wanted a pipe and a cane and earmuffs and new spectacles and all the rest and there they are—all of 'em. [*Points to things on floor.*]

GRANDFATHER. Now, what do you say if we just swap presents. And we won't let a soul know about it. We'll keep it for a secret. I wouldn't have Santa know for the world.

JIMMY. Oh, Grandfather, let's do that. Then everything will come our just right. And my Christmas won't be spoiled after all.

GRANDFATHER. Good! Then we're all agreed. Here, gather up these toys for two-year olds. And I'll take the ones that look as if they were intended for a greybeard. [*Leans over and picks up gifts.*]

JIMMY. Oh, thank you for exchanging. It sure was fine of you to give up that engine and that ball and all those nice toys. [*He stands with his arms full of toys.*]

GRANDFATHER. Yes, it was really very good of me, Jimmy, and I wouldn't have done it for anyone else in the world, except you. [*He rises with arms full.*]

JIMMY. Well, merry Christmas again. Grandfather, and I hope you eat lots of turkey for dinner today.

GRANDFATHER. Same to you, Jimmy, and don't go too strong on the stuffing. [*Exit both in opposite directions.*]

CURTAIN

Tableaux and Pantomimes

HER FIRST TREE

A tiny child stands looking at a small, gaily trimmed tree. She has one hand outstretched toward the tree.

READER.

Oh, what does Betty see?—
Her first bright Christmas tree!
She never thought trees grew this way,
All colored, sparkling, rich and gay.
She's wondering if the tree would fall
Should she dare pick one round red ball.

RIDING TO DREAMLAND

A rocking horse stands in the center of the stage. On it sits a small boy, drooping over sleepily, head hanging, and eyes closed.

READER.

This was his Christmas present,
He rode the livelong day;
He stopped to eat his dinner, then
Again was on his way.

But now he is so sleepy
No more his bright eye beams;
Just one more journey he must make—
Off to the land of dreams.

THE ONE DAY

A small child holds up a calendar open at the month of December. The number 25 is in bright red.

READER.

Days may come and days may go,
Holidays just row on row,
But is there one who will not say,
That best of all is Christmas Day?

THE PROBLEM

A small boy is sitting at a table laden with dishes and the remains of a rich feast. He is leaning sadly on his elbows, head to one side and surveying a big piece of pie on a plate before him.

READER.

This picture tells a sad, sad tale,
Oh, listen closely without fail!

Here is Johnny 'bout to cry
Because he has no room for pie.

You see, he ate too much before,
Not stopping to think there would be more.

Please take warning from all this,
So that the dessert you'll not miss.

KING NO MORE

A bare Christmas tree with a few odds and ends of decoration left hanging, is standing at one side of the stage. The floor around it is littered with Christmas relics. The Christmas tree is sadly leaning to one side.

READER.

This was the shining king
Who reigned in splendor bright,

From early Christmas morning
Until the fall of night.

But now his reign is over,
He's bare from tip to toe,
And so he goes his saddened way—
As all kings have to go.

AS CHRISTMAS PASSES

A small girl is seated in a rocker bent over on her elbows, and reading intently a book in her lap. Beside her a small boy is playing with an engine.

READER.

What can Mary be reading?
It is her Christmas book!
At not another toy since
She's given one, short look.
While Jimmy runs his engine
Down on his two small knees,
Mary is off through Bookland
To other lands and seas.

THE END OF THE TRAIL

A heap of toys are piled up in the center of the room. The bear is on his side, the engine is upset, etc. On a chair nearby hang the clothes of a small boy who has plainly gone to bed. His shoes are scattered, one being by the chair and the other some distance off.

READER.

All day long they played and played—
Billy and his toys—
He thought that he could never leave
His dearest Christmas joys.

But when the sandman came around,
And smiled at him instead,
Without a word small Billy turned,
And tumbled into bed.

THE LISTENERS

Two small boys in pajamas are kneeling by a window with faces half turned toward audience. One has a hand behind his ear, with head inclined in listening attitude. The other also has his head inclined in listening attitude, but with uplifted hand indicating caution.

READER.

They thought they heard his bells, so
They jumped right out of bed,
They wanted to see his gay reindeers,
As swiftly past they sped.
But, now, they're just a-wondering,
And feeling downcast—some—
For maybe Santa saw them there,
And decided not to come.

ANOTHER CHRISTMAS DREAM

A little girl is sleeping in bed. Her bed is in shadows, if lighting facilities make that possible. At a distance stands Santa with a red glow cast over him. He has taken ten beautiful dolls from his sack and has set them in a row against the wall. He is smiling and pointing to the dolls, indicating that they are all for the small girl.

READER.

Of course, it's only a dream—
Ten dolls would never do!
But how very wonderful it would be
If only dreams came true!

THE WINTER BOYS

Three boys, muffled up in outside clothing. One is pulling a sled. One has skates over his shoulder. A third carries skis.

READER.

Good old Santa remembered these boys
Had asked him for some outdoor toys;
You see how well he did obey
Their orders for this Christmas Day.
Santa knows red cheeks are best—
He gives the toys, they do the rest.

AUNT MARY'S MISTAKE

A little girl is wearing mittens that are much too large for her, a cap that comes away down over her eyes, and a muffler that reaches to the floor.

READER.

To think Aunt Mary would send such gifts!
What can the dear soul mean?
She ought to remember that Ann's not fat,
But very small and lean.

Aunt Mary, of course, thinks all small girls
Should be both wide and fat—
She was that way when she was small,
No need to tell one that.

GREAT PREPARATIONS

A table stands in the center of the room at which the mother is preparing dinner. She is mixing something in a bowl. Beside her stands her oldest girl, measuring out baking powder and other ingredients and putting them into a

cup. A small boy is sitting in a small chair nearby and paring potatoes. Two small girls and one large boy are scurrying back and forth with pans of vegetables and jars of fruit which they bring on from off-stage and place on the table.

READER.

Helter-skelter! Christmas Day!
It's very plainly on the way.
See those good souls hard at work.
Not a second do they shirk.
Cakes and cookies now are made,
Browned to just the richest shade.
Jars of fruit and juicy pies
To make you blink your dazzled eyes!
Won't this dinner make a show
With all the good things in a row?
Helter-skelter! Christmas Day!
It's very plainly on the way.

TWINS

A small girl is wearing a frilly pink dress with pink hose. She is sitting on a small chair. Beside her on another sits her doll, almost as large as she is, and dressed the same way. At a distance another little girl and her doll sit side by side. The second girl and doll wear a pretty bright blue.

READER.

How wise old Santa is!
Just see this pretty sight!
What a mistake it would have been
Had he not matched them right!

But pink to pink and blue to blue,
Old Santa knew was best,
Proving his great ability
By this important test.

Monologues

THE EAVESDROPPER

You know, I got sumpin' to tell you. But I don't dare talk too loud. He might hear, you know. Lis'n! Las' night Santa was around measurin' our chimney. I heard him as plain as day. First he landed on the roof, and I could hear him climbin' around, and the roof went "Creak! Creak!" 'cause Santa—you know how he looks. [*Measures immense imaginary stomach.*] And I thought to myself. My goodness, what if the roof breaks and Santa comes tumblin' through! My goodness, what will I say! You see, I was scared he'd think I was listenin' and, of course, I wasn't, not at all. [*Shakes head very emphatically.*] Only, I was lyin' wide awake and I sort of heard things, but I wasn't listenin'. No, indeed. Well, anyway, pretty soon Santa got over close to the chimney, and he looked down and saw that the fire was 'most out, so he thought he'd look around a little. And then he started down and I could hear his shoes scrapin' and scrapin' and scrapin' along the sides of the chimney. Oh, I just trembled I was so excited. And then pretty soon what do you think I heard? Oh, you'll never guess—I heard Santa grunt! A great, big grunt! 'Cause, you see, our chimney was too small for him, and he was so tight that he just couldn't stand it any more and so he grunted. Then I s'pose [*With forlorn air.*] he found out that he couldn't go any farther, so he turned around, and started climbin' up again. I could 'most have cried. The only chance I ever had to see Santa and then I had to miss it, just 'cause our chimney was too small. Well, I know one thing. My folks has got to make that chimney bigger, so that when Santa comes around measurin' next year I'll really and truly see him.

TOMMY TUCKER OFFERS SOME ADVICE

SMALL FAT BOY WEARING A TINY RED CAP PERCHED ON SIDE OF HEAD, AND A VERY SMALL, TIGHT RED JACKET.

I want to give you folks a bit of advice. My name's Tommy Tucker. I'm the feller who sang for his supper. Well, they brought me my supper and when I saw it, my eyes just popped right out. There was turkey and stuffin' and pertatoes and cranberries and peas and beans and pud-din' and pies and cakes and nuts and cookies—Whew! Don't ask me to name the rest. And I waded right in. I ate and ate. Believe me or not, I ate it all. And now comes the sad part. [*Shakes head dismally.*] Ever since then I haven't been able to sing a note. No, sir-r, not a note. I ate so much that I lost my voice. Of all the times I've gone hungry since because I haven't been able to sing for my supper! I just thought I'd tell you, 'cause tomorrow is Christmas Day, and I know how you're goin' to act. But I warn you that you better look out. Remember what happened to me. Just remember.

A STRANGE DIFFERENCE

A SMALL GIRL IS SEATED IN A CHAIR WITH AN ARMFUL OF DOLLS. THERE IS A RAG DOLL, A CHINA DOLL AND A RUBBER DOLL.

It really is the strangest thing. There is such a difference in the dolls that Santa sends me each year. Now, some of them are so strong and healthy. They never know a day's sickness. I scarcely know I have them they cause me such a little bit of trouble. Take Angeline Christine Clarabell, for instance. [*Picks up the rag doll.*] Now, this child has never known what it means to stay in bed for five minutes because of illness. I have dropped her a hundred times, and once I even rocked on her, but she only smiled and never said a word. And this doll—[*Picks up the rubber doll.*] This is absolutely the healthiest doll I have ever

had. I'm ashamed to tell it, but once I threw her up against the side of the house, and instead of breaking or acting up like that, she bounced right back into my arms. I have twisted her and bit her and made her go swimming in the bathtub and stepped on her and everything imaginable. Yet, here she is—in the best of health and perfectly sound in every way. But this one—[*Takes up China doll.*] Dear! Dear! The trouble this child has caused me. I hadn't had her two weeks when she had a terrible accident and was in bed a month with a broken face. And no sooner was she up and around than she was attacked by some sort of dreadful disease. Her legs and arms started to fall off, and all her insides came out. Oh, it was terrible! You can't imagine how terrible it was! I despaired of ever saving her life, though I had three of the best doctors in town. Well, really, you will scarcely believe it, but that child was so sick that she lost all her hair. Yes, indeed. It all fell off at once one day. A dreadful disease, that was. And that isn't all. Since that day she's suffered from three broken legs, one cracked head, two sprained ankles, one smashed nose and four broken backs. But it all goes to prove what I said before, that Santa brings dolls that are so different, as far as their health is concerned, that it is really most strange. I would be glad if someone spoke to him about it. It certainly is a matter that should be brought to his attention.

HIS BOOKS

A SMALL BOY IS SITTING BY A TABLE READING. A TABLE LAMP
THROWS A ROSY GLOW OVER HIM. THE REST OF THE STAGE
IS DARK. THE SPEAKER SHOULD SIT AT THE SIDE OF
THE TABLE, RATHER THAN AT THE BACK.

Say, mebbe this ain't some book that Santa brought me for 'Christmas! Some book! There's more people been killed than in any other book I ever read. It sure is a grand story. I wonder how Santa ever happened to pick such a good one. How did he know the kind of story I like? But leave it to him. He knows everything, I guess. Just the

other day I was saying to Paw that I hoped to goodness that there would be a flock of pirates in my new Christmas book, and Paw said he hoped so, too. He said that maybe when I got to reading the book, I would get so scared that I'd keep quiet for awhile. And was there pirates in flocks! Well, I'll say there was. There was bushels of them. And such pirates! The boldest, badest fellers you ever saw. They didn't care who they cut up. They just went sailing along, and captured all the ships they found, and made folks walk the plank. Say, that business of walking the plank—that was some business! Imagine, now, just imagine, they'd take you and blindfold you, and then they'd tell you to walk straight ahead, and, of course, you'd have to mind. Well, you started out a-walking and a-walking and then the first thing you know, you wasn't walking at all. You was flying. For you see when you came to the end of the plank you stepped off right into the sea. And when you got through flying, you started in swimming. Say, it must have been a great life! [*Leans elbow pensively on table and closes book.*] You know, I've often thought what I'd do if I ever met a pirate. I think I could handle him. I got a special scheme thought up. Course I can't tell you what it is, for I wouldn't want it to get around. But it's a good one. I'd just like to see the pirate that could get the best of me. But—[*A clock sounds off-stage. The little boy jumps in startled manner.*] My goodness! I—I—well, say, believe I'm getting nervous. But that reminds me [*Opens book hurriedly.*], I have only half an hour before it's time for bed, and I haven't found out yet if the three prisoners escaped. . . . [*Reads.*]

MAMMA'S ASSISTANT

A TINY GIRL DRESSED AS A COOK, WITH WHITE CAP AND LARGE APRON REACHING TO FLOOR.

I heard my mamma say she wished she had someone to help her with her Christmas cooking. So I decided I'd help her and su'prise her. An' so when she was out of the

kitchen I got busy and helped her a lot. I put a whole cupful of salt in the soup 'cause I didn't think she used enough. An' I put a lot of sugar in the potatoes 'cause I like all my things sweet. An' poured a whole box of cocoanut into the chocolate cake she was makin'. Last of all I stirred up the eggs she was boilin' for the salad. I didn't think they were boilin' fast enough, but I'm afraid I broke all the shells. But I guess that won't make any difference. They'll cook lots faster now. Won't mamma be pleased an' su'prised when she finds out she got her wish?

HOW NOAH DID IT

A SMALL BOY IS SEATED ON THE FLOOR SURROUNDED BY ANIMALS FROM NOAH'S ARK. THE ARK STANDS CLOSE BY.

Santa Claus did get my letter, after all. I was scared he wouldn't, 'cause I forgot to put his address on it, but I guess our pos'man knows everybody in the world. He said he took it right to Santa's house 'cause he was sure it was extra special and it was, too. I bin wantin' Noah's Ark for the longes' time, ever since I bin told the story 'bout him. You know, Noah—he—he—built this here Ark. He built it 'cause it started to rain. And it rained and rained and rained and—and everybody got wet. But Noah, he went and built this here ship, and then he called to all the animals and he invited them to come into his ship. And the animals jus' come runnin' 'cause they was gettin' all wet. There was two animals of every kind. Here's the two camels [*Holds them up.*], and here's the two nelefants, and here's the two kankerroos, and here's all the animals. [*Puts them down and sighs.*] Sa-ay! I bet Noah had the time of his life feedin' them animals and teachin' 'em tricks! I wish I could 'uv bin there. Say! If I'd bin there I'd 'uv asked Mr. Noah if I couldn't take care of the nelefants. A nelefant is something I've always wanted to have—a real, live nelefant. If I had a nelefant I'd let him sleep with me and eat with me and everything. I wonder—

[*Claps hands.*]—if I wrote Santa a dandy long letter next Christmas if he would send me one? I believe I will. He brought Johnny Sampson a little baby sister for a Christmas present. Why couldn't he bring me a nelefant? I bet two cents he will!

RED AND GREEN

TWO VERY SMALL GIRLS, ONE DRESSED ALL IN BRIGHT RED—
STOCKINGS, DRESS AND CAP. THE OTHER LITTLE
GIRL IS ALL IN BRIGHT GREEN.

THE GIRL IN RED. Red means a lot of things. It's the brightest of all the Christmas colors, though 'course there's yellow for the candles and white for the popcorn. But red is most 'portant 'cause the cranberries are red and you can do two things with them. You can eat them or you can hang them on the Christmas tree. There's all kinds of red, and some reds are redder than other ones, but I guess the reddest red in the world is the red that the girl got who forgot and went and stood under the mistletoe.

THE GIRL IN GREEN. Green means a lot of things, too. It makes you think of summer and all the pretty things. The grass is green and so are all the nice trees. And at Christmas the red wouldn't be so pretty if it weren't for the green pine trees and the holly wreaths. Of course, there's different sorts of green, too, but there's one kind I can't understand at all. You know my Uncle Bill. Well, he wanted to borrow our radio, but my papa said that it was broke and had to be fixed. Then my Uncle Bill said he would fix it. And he did fix it. Now we'll have to buy a brand new radio. An'—an' my papa was awful cross 'bout it. "I ought to have knowed better than to let him monkey with it," he said to mamma, "he's so green he couldn't fix anything." And since then I've looked and looked at my Uncle Bill and looked and looked, and still I can't see any green.

A BIG QUESTION

They say the world is changin' at the rate of sixty miles a minute, and folks is gettin' new ideas. And I thinks to myself, "Well, if they're lookin' for new ideas I can give 'em a few, and some mighty good ones, at that." 'Cause for some time now I've bin thinkin' 'bout how crazy we serve our dinners. 'Stead of beginnin' with the good things and fillin' up with them, we begin with the worst ones and then when we reach the good ones, we're too blamed full to eat. 'Magine beginnin' a meal with vegetable soup and endin' it with strawberry shortcake. Where should the strawberry cake have come on? Why, right at the very beginnin', of course. Anyone would know that, if they only stopped to think. The Chinese have the right idea. They start right. No ole soup for them at the beginnin' of the meal. No, sirree. Candy and cake and nuts and all sorts of good things—that's what they have. And I'm all for startin' in the same way. Why not begin with Christmas dinner and first of all put on the plum puddin'? Say, wouldn't that be corkin'? And then, follow it up with the next best thing, and keep right on. And if at the end there's any poor foolish person that thinks he'd like some soup, let him help hisself. He can have the whole blamed kettle full, far as I'm concerned.

Opening and Closing Numbers

WE WANT TO PLEASE YOU

*Melody: Long, Long Ago, GOLDEN BOOK OF
FAVORITE SONGS.*

We are so glad we can welcome you here,
This Christmas Eve, dear Christmas Eve;
For you we'll sing and we'll speak without fear,
This Christmas Eve, Christmas Eve.
Many the hearts that are just bubbling o'er,
May our glad songs make them bubble the more,
With you success we are hoping to score,
This Christmas Eve, Christmas Eve.

If you will join us in all of our fun,
This Christmas Eve, dear Christmas Eve;
Then, oh! how quickly the minutes will run,
This Christmas Eve, Christmas Eve.
But with your faces so smiling and bright,
We know the program will turn out just right,
And you'll enjoy all the colorful sight,
This Christmas Eve, Christmas Eve.

THE BIG WELCOME

TO BE GIVEN BY A SMALL BOY

They said that I should greet you here,
And welcome you tonight;
I said that 'cause I was so small
I didn't think it right.

But probably some big fellow
Wouldn't do it half as well,

Wouldn't bring you half the greetings that
I'm glad I'm here to tell.

I hope you'll 'gree that a man's size
Is scarcely worth a fig,
And still be glad to see me since
My welcome is so big.

A SONG AND SMILES OF WELCOME

[Seven children take part on the stage and the entire school off-stage, if desired. The seven children wear bright green capes made very full. The capes reach to the waist and are lined with red. Around the bottom of each is a fringe of small red bells cut from drawing paper. On the head of each speaker is worn a tall red dunce cap. Each child wears a large red letter on his breast, letter being concealed by the cape until the time for revealing it arrives. The letters form the word WELCOME. Capes are securely tied at neck so that they will not come loose.]

The seven enter in the proper order of the letters, and march around stage, singing the following song in which entire school joins if it is at all possible and the children are seated close enough to the stage so that their help will not distract attention from the stage.

*Melody: There's Music in the Air, GOLDEN BOOK OF
FAVORITE SONGS.*

It's Christmas, merry Christmas,
And the tree is all a-shine;
We're glad to see you present,
And we hope you're feeling fine.
All our songs we mean to sing,
So your ears will gaily ring;
Let your joy be all confessed,
While we try to do our best.

At beginning of second stanza the speakers line up and, facing the audience, come to a halt, standing in position until the end of the stanza.

It's Christmas, merry Christmas,
And our hearts are now aglow,
Our feelings, gay and happy,
We're anxious you should know.

It's because we see you here
That our song rings sweet and clear,
And because we would please you
Just the very best we'll do.

Speakers now deliver following lines:

FIRST.

Our song has told our welcome,
But yet we'd like to say,
We hope that you'll be pleased with us
Before you go away.

SECOND.

We hope the Christmas Spirit
Will grow and grow and grow,
You have it in full measure for
Your smiles have told us so.

THIRD.

The tree is gleaming, rich and tall,
A wondrous Yuletide sight!
It adds at least the half of joy
This very merry night.

FOURTH.

Our pieces we have practiced,
It seems we can't forget;
We even said them in our dreams
When worry made us fret.

FIFTH.

Yes, one and all, we're glad
To see you here tonight,
We never saw an audience
Look even half as bright.

SIXTH.

Perhaps you'd like to know
What means these capes of green;
I'll tell you just a little bit—
They're more than what they seem.

SEVENTH.

Now, all together let us
A final welcome bow,
Fling wide our capes and just reveal
Our hidden secret now.

At these words the capes are flung open. This is done by taking hold at the bottom of the cape in front on each side of the opening. The sides of the cape are then lifted, curtain-wise, revealing the red lining and the red letter on the breast. As the word WELCOME is revealed the following is sung. Speakers march around stage, singing and holding up cape ends, and go off stage.

Oh, welcome, welcome, welcome!
Is the last we have to say.
We give you all our greetings
For a merry Christmas Day.

May your stocking just o'erflow,
Santa will be good we know,
Put your stocking out tonight,
And Old Nick will treat it right.

THE ANNOUNCERS

CHARACTERS

MR. SONG

MISS DIALOGUE

[Mr. Song wears a clown suit of white covered with notes of music and other musical symbols. Miss Dialogue comes on stage dressed in ordinary clothes, but carrying over her arm the following assortment: a shawl, an apron and cook's cap, a brightly colored cape with cap to match. Besides that she carries a pair of spectacles, a mixing bowl with a spoon in it, and a fairy wand with a star on the end.]

Both enter at same time from opposite directions.

MR. SONG. How do you do? May I ask who you are?

MISS DIALOGUE. I am Miss Dialogue. And you?

MR. SONG. I am Mr. Song. I was invited here tonight to wish all these good folks welcome, but I didn't expect to have company.

MISS DIALOGUE. Why, Mr. Song! What would a program be without a dialogue or two?

MR. SONG. That's right. We're both important. Well, then, I suppose we will have to divide this welcome business. I suppose we could make it a duet.

MISS DIALOGUE. I'm sorry if you were expecting to make it a solo.

MR. SONG. Oh, it's no great matter. But what in the world are you doing with all that stuff you are holding? I thought when I first saw you that you must be traveling around the world.

MISS DIALOGUE [*places articles on table*]. I'll show you what they are. Since I am Miss Dialogue I must have several kinds of dress, for who knows what part I may play? Sometimes I am an old, old lady. Like this. [*She*

quickly throws shawl around shoulders and puts on spectacles. Then humps away over in an aged attitude.]

MR. SONG [*laughing*] Fine! Fine! You look just like an old lady. I would wager my head you were at least one hundred.

MISS DIALOGUE [*flinging off shawl and glasses*]. But many times at Christmas I wear this important dress. Oh, the dialogues I've been in in which I baked Christmas cakes and cookies and made plum puddings and fixed turkeys. I ought to be a wonderful cook considering all the experience I've had. [*While she has been talking she has put on apron and cap and has taken up bowl and spoon.*] And this is the way I beat them up, beat them up, beat them up. [*Beats vigorously.*]

MR. SONG [*applauding*]. I like you best of all in that part. Keep right on beating and maybe if the cake turns out well, I'll get a piece.

MISS DIALOGUE [*removing apron and cap*]. Oh, no doubt, and you have plenty of company, too. We all love to eat. But one of my pet parts [*Takes up cape which has been made as sparkly and pretty as time will allow.*] is when I wear such a costume as this. [*Puts it on and seizes wand.*] Then I am a fairy, a beautiful fairy, and I bring people good luck or I enchant them or do any one of a thousand wonderful things. [*Skips around stage gaily.*] And sometimes high in the sky I visit the Fairy Queen who reigns over all Christmas fairies.

MR. SONG. That's a very pretty dress, and all this you have shown me is making me feel sort of useless. I don't know if I'm as much as I thought I was.

MISS DIALOGUE. Certainly you are, Mr. Song. Any of these people would tell you that.

MR. SONG. Well, I think the best way to show what I can do is to have my followers sing a song. That will prove whether I really am of some use.

MISS DIALOGUE. As for me, I must be off, for now that I have wished this smiling audience welcome, I must get busy with my parts and not disappoint them.

MR. SONG. And I with my songs. [*Exit both.*]

[*A song would very appropriately follow this number.*]

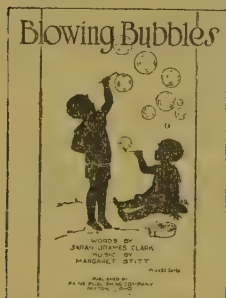
LAST CHRISTMAS WISHES

Although this is the end of all
The pieces and the songs,
Just keep that bright smile showing in
The place where it belongs.

For if you go out smiling, it
Will plainly let us know
That you enjoyed the evening here,
And all we had to show.

And now just one more word or two,
Before you go away:
We wish you all a merry Christmas,
And a happy New Year's Day.

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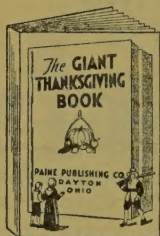
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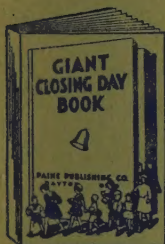
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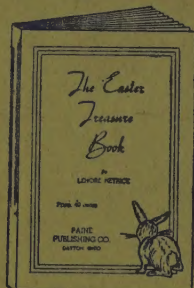
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